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SOME MORAL ISSUES IN PSYCHOANALYSIS

IT was possible as little as eight years ago for a Catholic moralist to condemn the use of psychoanalysis, on the part of the practitioner as well as the patient, as seriously sinful without reservations or distinctions. This extreme opinion has been rendered untenable by the late Pope Pius XII, who, in a series of three allocutions from 1952 to 1958, gave both explicit and implicit approval to the work of psychotherapy, including the methods of psychoanalysis. Keenly aware, as he always seemed to be, of the problems currently agitating religious, moral and intellectual circles, His Holiness spoke out clearly in defence of the new methods which had been devised and were being devised to restore or safeguard mental health and alleviate forms of suffering almost incurable a few generations ago. In effect he blessed the work of psychotherapists, even of those who were striving to heal mental and emotional disturbances by involved probing into the more deeply hidden

recesses of the mind, into psychological dynamisms not clearly or explicitly known to scientists and moralists until recently. He blessed this work and he encouraged it, as he was accustomed to encourage all sound scientific research, and at the same time he laid down certain broad principles which ought to guide it. These were not indeed scientific principles whose formulation belongs to the scientist, but moral principles which guide all human activity, even scientific research.

In these three allocutions, the Holy Father spoke on a variety of moral problems which might arise in psychological research and clinical work—the scope of science's legitimate interests, the many inalienable rights of individuals, the good of the community, the various obligations of researchers and doctors, and the like—but the problems which interest us here in particular are those which arise especially in the psychoanalytic session, and which involve questions of personal purity and moral integrity. The particular purpose of this enquiry is to examine some of the moral problems which the patient might face in the course of psychoanalysis.

In his first allocution in 1952,[1] Pope Pius XII condemns the extreme position of some psychoanalysts who hold that there are no limits whatsoever to the probing allowed, or, as they say, required in a psychoanalytic session. Condemning the basic postulate of this position, that, namely, the therapeutic purpose is superior to morality, he asserts the existence of limits imposed by the moral law on the emotions, memories or experiences which patients may allow to be aroused in themselves in a psychoanalytic session. In particular he condemns the theory of pansexuality as a fundamentally false position, unjustified theoretically and injurious in practice. By way of positive direction, he urges the usefulness of indirect treatment of psychic disorders through the training of the conscious mind —a position also defended by many contemporary psychoanalysts. The Holy Father says:

Science itself, therefore, as well as its research and acquisitions,

[1] September 14, 1952. Address to the First International Congress on the Histopathology of the Nervous System. *The Catholic Mind,* LI (1953), 305-313.

must be inserted in the order of values. Here there are well-defined limits which even medical science cannot transgress without violating higher moral rules. . . .

In this connection, the basic considerations may be set out in the following form: " The medical treatment of the patient demands taking a certain step. This in itself proves its moral legality." Or else: " A certain new method hitherto neglected or little used will give possible, probable or sure results. All ethical considerations as to the licitness of this method are obsolete and should be treated as pointless."

How can anyone fail to see that in these statements truth and falsehood are intermingled. . . .

As for the patient, he is not absolute master of himself, of his body or of his soul. He cannot, therefore, freely dispose of himself as he pleases. Even the reason for which he acts is of itself neither sufficient nor determining. The patient is bound to the immanent teleology laid down by nature. He has the right of *use,* limited by natural finality, of the faculties and powers of his human nature. . . .

Moreover, in exercising his rights to dispose of himself, his faculties and his organs, the individual must observe the hierarchy of the orders of values— or within a single order of values, the hierarchy of particular rights—insofar as the rules of morality demand, . . .

Here is another example. In order to rid himself of repressions, inhibitions or psychic complexes, man is not free to arouse in himself for therapeutic purposes each and every appetite in his being, appetites whose impure waves flood his unconscious or subconscious mind. He cannot make them the object of his thoughts and fully conscious desires, with all the shocks and reprecussions such a process entails. For a man and a Christian there is a law of integrity and personal purity, of self-respect, forbidding him to plunge so deeply into the world of sexual suggestions and tendencies. Here the " medical and therapeutic interests of the patient " find a moral limit.

It is not proved—it is, in fact, incorrect—that the pansexual method of a certain school of psychoanalysis is an indispensable integrating part of all psychotherapy which is serious and worthy of the name. . . .

We speak this way because today these assertions are too often made with apodictic assurance. Where instincts are concerned it would be better to pay more attention to indirect treatment and to the action of the conscious psyche on the whole of imaginative

and affective activity. This technique avoids the deviations we have mentioned." [2]

It is worthy of note that the Holy Father has not condemned unconditionally the techniques of psychoanalysis which may arouse emotions, even strong emotions, of a sexual nature or of any other kind which might ordinarily prejudice moral integrity. He condemns the thesis that each and every such emotion must be raised, and this " without further considerations." Evidently, he is not excluding the possibility that some such emotions might be licitly tolerated in some circumstances.

In summary, His Holiness establishes on the one hand the morally unacceptable position taken by pansexuality, and on the other, a method of psychotherapy which is eminently safe from the moral point of view, and, in between them, the possibility of the use of some methods which are not, from the moral point of view, entirely without danger.

In his second allocution on this topic,[3] the Holy Father repeats in substance what he has already said.

> A word also on the method sometimes employed by the psychologist to liberate the ego of its inhibition in the case of aberration in the sexual domain. We refer to complete sexual initiation, which would not pass over anything in silence, leave nothing in obscurity. Is there not therein a harmful overestimation of knowledge in these matters? . . .
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> What has just been said of inconsiderate initiation for therapeutic purposes is valid also for certain forms of psychoanalysis. One should not come to regard them as the only means of relieving or of curing psychical sexual troubles. The trite principle that sexual troubles of the unconscious, as all other inhibitions of identical origin, can be suppressed only by their being brought to the level of consciousness, is not valid if it is generalized without distinction. The indirect treatment also has its efficacy and often suffices to a large extent. As to the use of the psychoanalytic method in the sexual domain, Our allocution of September 13, already cited, pointed out the moral limits. In truth, one cannot consider as licit, without further consideration, the evocation to

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 306-308.

[3] April 13, 1953. Address to the Fifth International Congress of Psychotherapy and Clinical Psychology. *The Catholic Mind*, LI (1953), 428-435.

the level of consciousness of all the representations, emotions and sexual experiences which lie dormant in the memory and the unconscious, and which are thus actualized in the psychic. If the protests arising from a sense of human and Christian dignity are heeded, who would risk making the claim that this manner of treatment does not imply both immediate and future moral danger, when, even if the therapeutic necessity of unlimited exploration be affirmed, this necessity is not, after all, established? [4]

Here again His Holiness condemns the extreme position of pansexuality in theory and in practice, and counsels the safer method, but again in terms which do not unreservedly exclude psychoanalytic explorations of the mind but rather condemn only those explorations which are unreserved. In this same allocution, the Holy Father also touches on another point which may concern us here, the morality, namely, of permitting material sins.

Respect for God and His holiness must always be reflected in man's conscious acts. When, even without subjective fault on the part of the person involved, these acts are in contrast to the divine model, they still run counter to the ultimate finality of his being. That is why what is called "material sin" is something which should not exist, and which constitutes in the moral order a reality which is not indifferent.

From this a conclusion follows for psychotherapy. In the presence of material sin it cannot remain neutral. It can, for the moment, tolerate what remains inevitable. But it must know that God cannot justify such an action. With still less reason can psychotherapy counsel a patient to commit material sin on the ground that it will be without subjective guilt.[5]

In his final allocution on this subject,[6] the Holy Father again returns to the question of personal moral integrity, this time to consider somewhat more precisely the limits which might be morally justifiable in psychoanalytic sessions. He asserts as one example of a clearly immoral procedure the subjection of reason and responsibility to intinct and passion, i. e.,

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 431-432.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 434.

[6] April 10, 1958. Address to a Congress of the International Association of Applied Psychology. *The Pope Speaks*, V (1958), 7-20.

any method which would result even temporarily in the loss of rational control over the sense appetites. This he condemns as an action immoral in itself and therefore never permissible. Thus he says:

> It is contrary, therefore, to the moral order for man freely and knowingly to subject his rational faculties to his lower instincts. When tests or psychoanalysis or any other method reach that point, its use becomes immoral and unquestionably must be denied. Naturally, it is the duty of your conscience to determine, in particular cases, what courses of action are thus to be rejected.[7]

At the same time he acknowledges the permissibility, according to the principle of double effect, of allowing certain evils, even moral dangers, for a proportionately grave cause.

> It may also happen that certain actions expose one to the danger of violating the moral law: for example, the use of tests runs the risk in certain cases of arousing immoral thought, but the use of these tests becomes moral when proportionate motives justify the danger risked . . . It is quite impossible to avoid all danger. Such a demand would paralyze every undertaking and would seriously harm the interests of everyone; and so morality permits this risk on condition that it be justified by a motive proportionate to the importance of the goods threatened and to the proximity of the danger which threatens them.[8]

We have cited at some length the words of the Holy Father on this problem of moral issues in psychoanalysis because they are evidently the foundations to be used in making moral judgments in this somewhat novel area. Since, however, it is not the custom for the Roman Pontiffs to consider moral problems down to their finest details, but rather to leave the particular applications to the periodicals and manuals, these questions should not be left to rest at this stage. When a patient or an analyst seeks moral guidance, it should be forthcoming even in detail. Accordingly there have been many commentaries on the three allocutions mentioned above, and some have precised further on the question Pope Pius XII considered.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

Father Gordon F. George, S. J.,[9] amplifies the description of the pansexual method condemned by Pope Pius as the method so colored by sexual theory that it is determinedly and constantly aimed at real or supposedly sexual roots of psychic disorder. As a result of the theoretical bias, a psychoanalyst would bring the patient back again and again to sex, suggest sexual interpretations to all dreams, encourage free associations to sexual contents and ultimately, whether implicitly or explicitly, influence the patient to give free rein to sexual impulses. These would be the practical results of the false theoretical position. It is evident that they must fall under the papal condemnation.

Father John Ford, S. J.,[10] similarly notes the Holy Father's rejection of the errors involved in any pansexual theory of psychoanalysis, and then, and more importantly, carries the discussion several steps further, undertaking to examine and clarify some of the moral problems which might arise in the course of psychoanalytic treatment even when it is carried out without any of the aberrations of pansexuality. For it often happens that patients in the course of treatment encounter situations in which sexual feeling (or other feelings or impulses which are morally unacceptable) are aroused, not deliberately or expressly and for their own sakes, but as a stage of the treatment which seems almost inevitable. Faced with the need of a cure on the one hand and a doubt of the morality of the treatment on the other, the patient may be acutely perplexed. For his guidance, Father Ford makes the following points. First, it is clearly illicit to accept immoral advice, even if it is offered as a cure for psychic disorder. So, for example, the advice to fornicate for therapeutic reasons cannot be followed. You cannot do evil that good might come of it. Secondly, Father Ford warns of the dangers that might accompany the phenomenon of transference. Thirdly, he points out the danger of aggravating rather than aiding a psychic disorder, if, having turned the patient's moral world upside down by revealing his

[9] Cf. "The Pope on Psychoanalysis," *America*, 88 (Oct. 4, 1952), 12.
[10] Cf. *Linacre Quarterly*, XX (1953), 57-66.

unconscious sources of conduct, the analyst is unable to establish a new balance, or tries to do so on the basis of false moral principles. Fourthly, Father Ford points out the dangers inherent in the use of free association and the incidence of abreaction. Free association entails the release of imagination and feeling from deliberate control. Abreaction—a phenomenon whose nature is much disputed—involves an intense emotional response to the emerging memory of some past experience. In either case there is a danger of acquiescence in immoral thoughts or desires or phantasies.

Father Ford's first point needs no additional comment. The second, third and fourth points are much in need of discussion. It is evidently here that moral doubts will arise, for, although the phenomena and processes described are not in themselves necessarily evil, they certainly do contain elements of danger.

To pursue that discussion, Father Ford first notes some of the sins which are likely to be occasioned by these factors of the psychoanalytic session—deliberate indulgence in the desire for unchaste sexual acts, or complacence in unchaste sexual phantasies, or acquiescence in unchaste sexual emotion. These interior sexual sins must clearly be resisted and avoided as firmly as any overt sins.

Nevertheless, it does not follow that the occasions of such sins must be absolutely avoided. The patient may relate to the analyst the difficulties he has of a sexual nature, even if the telling of these thoughts, feelings, phantasies, impulses and experiences should result in present sexual excitement. The principle of double effect applies here, just as it does in the case of a patient who is physically ill, to whom a doctor's examination might be the source of troublesome excitement. Since the sexual thoughts or feelings related in a psychoanalytic session are secondary to the psychotherapeutic purpose (as we hope to show more clearly later), and as they are unwanted in and for themselves, they may be permitted to occur, even when foreseen, for a proportionately grave cause.

As the Holy Father has said, somewhere a delicate line must be drawn. Father Ford points to free association, abreaction

and transference as the processes in psychoanalysis whose moral aspects should be more thoroughly considered by the theologians. Without a doubt, these are the processes which demand the drawing of the delicate line. Some writers have so benignly interpreted the dangers in psychoanalysis as to leave the Holy Father's warnings meaningless. Others have found themselves unable to approve morally the use of free association or the occurrence of abreaction. Many moralists are aware that the psychological problems involved are still unclear and hesitate to pass judgment; some psychoanalysts make their judgments from faulty theological positions.

It would seem useful, then, to discuss these questions, to try to sketch in at least the general contours of the delicate line, so that useful and licit psychotherapy should not be impeded, while the higher demands of sound morality are satisfied. One approach to the consideration of these problems would be on the part of the psychoanalysts, which would entail for the analysts courses in moral theology. The other approach would be on the part of the theologians (and, indeed, the burden would seem to fall principally on them), and this would entail an understanding of the concepts and terminology of psychoanalysis. This latter is the task to which we are now addressing ourselves—the conversion of the concepts of psychoanalysis into terms more readily recognizable to the traditions of moral theology, and, subsequently, the moral judgments of the psychoanalytic factors in themselves.

A. The Psychoanalytic Session—Free Association

Free association is the spontaneous association of mental contents, in the broadest sense of mental. In its purest state it is a psychological condition which can be voluntarily induced or permitted by allowing the courses of psychological phenomena—images, ideas, feelings, emotions, impulses, etc.—to proceed without direction, following one another according to their own natural inclinations.

The efficient element inducing this state is negative—*re-*

movens prohibens—the release of the faculties or activities from normal voluntary control or direction, insofar as this is possible. While, therefore, there is a certain involuntariety in free association, in the sense that the will gives no positive direction to the activities, free association is voluntary in the moral sense, for the will permits it and could at any time halt it. The particular contents, therefore, which arise in the process of free association are at least voluntary *in causa* or indirectly, insofar as they can be foreseen either in particular or in general. They are to this extent morally imputable.

The supposition on which free association is founded is that psychological faculties, normally directed more or less by the will, have a natural movement of their own, and will follow a natural flow by which one image or idea or feeling leads to another somehow connected with it, and from this to another and so on.[11] This phenomenon is, of course, familiar to traditional psychology as well as to psychoanalysis. St. Thomas, following Aristotle, recognized the innate laws of imagination, memory and cogitation (e. g. contrast, similarity, contiguity, frequency, as well as the more general psychological laws which these faculties tend to obey (e. g. attention, interest). He also considered the natural appetites which, apart from the elicited appetites, impel each nature, and each faculty of any nature, towards its proper function. To the extent that these processes enter into daydreaming, morose delectation and the like, he has considered their moral implications.

In a psychoanalytic session, the extent of the use of the process of free association, and the way in which it is used, will vary with the preferences of each analyst, or the requirements of different patients, or even for circumstantial reasons. Certain elements, however, seem to be constant. The patient must be, as far as possible, physically and mentally at ease; comfortably disposed on the famous couch, freed as far as possible from external stimuli, with a sense of trust and con-

[11] As to the extent of these connections, some psychologists hold that all of a man's internal activities are united in one multi-connected matrix, and, given time and sufficient freedom, all would pass before consciousness.

fidence towards the analyst. I say " as far as possible " because he might already begin his associations in ordinary conversation with the analyst, or with a dream, or anywhere at all. The important thing is that he give his thoughts and feelings free play; his only overt contribution is reportorial—to describe as well as he can whatever passes through his mind. He is supposed to be absolutely candid, not deterred from reporting things because of shame or fear or for any ethical considerations, or because they seem trivial or irrelevant—not by any intellectual or emotional objections whatsoever.

It is obviously here that the moralist begins to get nervous. On several scores there are moral dangers involved in this absolute candor. We leave aside for the moment the question of secrets which cannot be revealed for reasons of justice, charity or religion, not because this question is unimportant, but because it falls under a genus of morality which is outside our present intention.[12]

The question here is whether or not such relaxation of voluntary control over mental processes and such candid reporting of what goes on when that control is released would lead a patient into thinking, feeling and expressing himself in ways which violate personal dignity and moral integrity. There is, on the one hand, the probability that the mind will turn to sexual thoughts and phantasies, or to the memory of libidinous experiences, and be so attracted and stirred by excitement that fresh consent may be given to them. Again, the mind may be led to old injuries suffered, old hatreds, and be stirred up again by hostility or rebellion. In either case, there is not only the question of whether or not such mental harrowings are morally justifiable, but also the question of the proximity of new actual sins, if consent is given to these passions.

Before passing judgment on the dangers inherent in the use

[12] Pope Pius XII speaks of this moral limit to psychoanalysis in the allocutions of April, 1953, and April, 1958. In the former he says: " But there are secrets which must on no account be divulged, even to a doctor, even in spite of grave personal inconveniences. The secret of Confession may never be revealed. It is equally forbidden for the professional secret to be communicated to another, including a doctor. The same is true of other secrets."

of free association, it would be well to review briefly the necessity for its use and the role of the analyst in a psychoanalytic session.

The express purpose of analytic treatment is to free a patient from distressing symptoms—physical, nervous, emotional, mental—of psychological origin. This purpose demands a knowledge of the root and nature of the difficulty. The use of free association supposes that a patient so distressed is wholly unable to give an adequate account of the pathogenic factors by an ordinary recounting of his present dispositions and past experiences. It is not simply a case of distorting or forgetting important details, as ordinarily happens in descriptions of present or past incidents. If this were the case, a little detective work and some memory aids might supply the full tale. What is actually the problem, and what is at the root of the psychological trouble, is an active rejection or repression, albeit unconscious, of certain factors and experiences from consciousness, and an active resistance to their resuscitation. If an experience has been intolerably painful or disagreeable—if it cannot be accepted as something a person can live with—it may be rejected from consciousness more or less completely, and more or less irrevocably, and this rejection can be accomplished without deliberation. Subsequent to the rejection, any other ideas or images which might suggest or lead to the repressed experience and tend to evoke it into consciousness, suffer a similar removal from the conscious sphere called supression.[13] But the repressed experience, or its memory, is not destroyed; it forms a complex and perdures. The complex is a psychic formation made up of the original, repressed image and the affective impulse attached to it, and any other images or thoughts, with their impulsive components, which have become associated with it in the unconscious, plus the various distortions of representation

[13] Freud also uses the terms "primal repression" for repression and "repression proper" for suppression. These concepts and the notions of complex formation so briefly summarized here can be found in fuller development in the articles entitled "Repression" (note pp. 86-92) and "The Unconscious" (note pp. 112-117), *Collected Papers of Sigmund Freud*, IV (London: Hogarth Press, 1956).

which may have evolved from it. This complex with its emotional charges strives for some kind of satisfaction and release by obtaining conscious recognition. If it fails to win through to consciousness against the repressive forces of the mind, its activity turns to the formation of psychological distress.

To solve the mental problem caused by a complex, the original, pathogenic experience must somehow be made conscious, if it is in any way to be handled. To make the experience conscious, the active force which is blocking it must somehow be circumvented. This is the immediate purpose of free association in psychoanalytic therapy. By giving thoughts free play, they will of themselves tend towards the repressed contents of the mind sooner or later, or will at least, and with equal therapeutic value, tend toward the barriers keeping certain mental contents unconscious.

These barriers are of highest interest to the analyst (and in fact to the patients). The points at which free association breaks off—leads to a blank or a sense of distress or confusion—indicate non-voluntary barriers to the free flow of thought, and these are the barriers which analysis is most concerned to locate. By locating them, an analyst can obtain insight into the patient's mental constitution, into the trains of thoughts and feelings which are more deeply hidden, the concealed complexes of ideas and impulses. Eventually, if the analysis is successful, the patient with more or less help from the analyst, will come to understand the ultimate seats of his psychological disturbances.

It may be too much to say that a patient who understands his conflicts is cured, but it is also certainly true that the patient who has unconscious conflicts must bring them to light before they can be solved.

In the psychoanalytic session in which the patient is encouraged to express himself so freely in the expectation of bringing buried conflicts up into the light of rational judgment, what is the role of the analyst? In the first place, his function is not that of a medical doctor who listens to symptoms, examines and prescribes remedies. Nor is he present simply to write up a

case history from the patient's reports. His role is in a sense much subtler. His purpose is to gain as deep and clear an insight as is possible into the patient's present, actual state of mind, with all its conflicts and conflict-born structures, and somehow to assist the patient to understand the same. How actively he should communicate his own insights is a matter of opinion. Some advise him to be as neutral as possible, like a catalyst which causes a reaction without entering into it. He should lend a sympathetic ear, draw forth the patient's confidence, relax his inhibitions and let the psyche untangle, as it were, spontaneously. Even Freud leaned towards this position.[14] Others recommend a more active role; the analyst should assist the patient by interpretations, by telling him the meaning of the things that come to mind, and by prodding half-conscious contents into full consciousness.[15] Still others advise direct instruction of the patient, immediate enlightenment about the unconscious forces operating within him. Almost any degree of activity may be assumed by the analyst depending on his theoretical considerations, but all are agreed that the essential point is to bring the patient to a practical realization of his own psychic constitution.

In almost all analysis, moreover, a special relationship develops between the analyst and the patient. It is something other than the relationship of trust, confidence, friendship and the like which might develop between a medical doctor and his patient. It is a relationship in which the analyst, aside from and beyond the respect he might command as a professional man and a friend, assumes in the eyes of the patient the role that a parent or some other authority figure had for him as a child. Whatever the motive underlying this substitution, it is considered of great importance, even crucial im-

[14] "The analyst respects his patient's personality; he does not try to mould it according to his own personal ideas; he is satisfied when instead of giving advice he can obtain his results by arousing the patient's own initiative." Quoted by Joseph Nuttin, *Psychoanalysis and Personality* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), p. 33.

[15] Cf. Otto Fenichel, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1945), p. 25.

portance, in most psychoanalysis, not because it makes the patient more candid, but because it reconstructs in the present the situation of the past in which his conflicts presumably started. By recreating this situation it is held that the harm once done can be most effectively undone.

B. Some Thomistic Interpretations

Before forming a moral judgment about free association in the psychoanalytic session, let us try to determine to what degree the phenomena involved are intelligible in terms of Thomistic psychology, and thus more or less readily susceptible to direct application of St. Thomas' moral conclusions. For if rejection, repression, complex formation, unconscious motivation and the like are psychological experiences which were wholly unfamiliar to him, and especially if they should involve a mode of voluntariety or involuntariety for which his psychological structures did not account, it might well be that the moral judgments would have to be formed in a new category involving a new mode of human act.

It is a matter of fact that such concepts as repression and complex formation received their first express formulation from Freud, and were subsequently described, divided, amplified and applied in the psychoanalytic schools. These phenomena were not adequately dealt with before the advent of psychoanalysis; it would be a mistake, however, to believe that all such "deep" psychological factors were entirely unknown.[16] Even the ancients had some obscure glimpses of what went on in man's mind beneath the surface. If, therefore, we analyse the general factors involved in the formation of a complex, and the effects of the complex, we will find, I believe, that much of this was understood in a general way, and fairly accounted for, in St. Thomas' psychology, even when the precise notion of the complex was lacking.

In the formation of a complex, the initial step is the rejection

[16] Kant, Schelling, von Hartmann, Ribot as well as others had a sustained interest in the hidden workings of the mind.

of some strongly felt experience because of its painful characteristics, and the unconscious continuance of this rejection, followed by the supression of ideas which might evoke its memory to consciousness for realization in action. Failing to emerge directly into consciousness, it has resort, by processes of association and phantasy creation, to indirect and disguised forms of representation, by means of which it may pass censorship into consciousness. If it succeeds in gaining some kind of conscious expression, it may cause no harm. If not, it produces symptoms of mental or emotional disorder.[17]

St. Thomas' psychology takes these factors into account in a general way. He did not organize this knowledge, or relate it except in principle to psychopathology, nor did he develop it to the point at which it could be useful for therapy. Nevertheless, his psychological observations are sufficiently pertinent to enable us to make a meaningful interpretation of properly psychoanalytical concepts in a Thomistic framework.

(1) *The aspect of rejection in the passions.*

In his studies of three passions in particular, fear, sorrow and despair, St. Thomas remarked frequently the debilitating effects they have on the whole psychism. These passions, if at all vehement, cause not only a specific recoil from the object exciting them, but also a general withdrawal and dejection, with both physical and psychological components.[18]

Fear is for the near future, for an imminent threat; a deep fear can be elicited, not only by an external physical threat, but also by an internal psychological threat, that is, by a strong emotional impulse within a man himself. For instance, any impulse which carries a sense of shame, such as cowardice, or a strong libidinous movement, or hostility toward a parent or friend, produces its own fear, for shame is a species of fear.

[17] See Fenichel, *op. cit.*, p. 20. "Thus we have in psychoneurosis, first a defense of the ego against an instinct, then a conflict between the instinct striving for discharge and the defensive forces of the ego, then a state of damming up, and finally the neurotic symptoms which are distorted discharges as a consequence of the state of damming up—a compromise between the opposing forces."

[18] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 37, a. 4.

It is not only because of the possibility of physical punishment that this fear is evoked, but more precisely and directly because self-respect and the expectation of love from others are threatened or seem to be. If, in addition, there is any reason to sense helplessness in the face of such a situation, the fear deepens into what St. Thomas calls agony, and this is especially true with the young and emotionally sensitive.[19] The general effect of fear is withdrawal from the fearful object, which St. Thomas calls a psychological and physiological contraction of the soul in its activities. The particular effects of intense fear are manifold: psychologically, it disturbs and confuses the mind, shakes the will and its resolutions; physically, it causes feelings of distress and weakness, and a sense of inferiority and withdrawal which paralyses responses and reactions. In every way, intense fear complicates its own problems, by shrinking away from them, abdicating the capacity to deal with them.[20]

If a person can escape the danger he fears, his fear should subside, but if the danger he fears is from himself or within himself, what he fears is already in some part inescapable, and then his fear is compounded with some species of sorrow. Sorrow, in St. Thomas' definition, is the emotional response to an actual affliction. If the sorrow is one from which there is no apparent relief, he calls it anxiety; if it becomes severe enough to induce a general depression, it is "acedia."[21] Anxiety, in this definition, would be typical of anyone who suffered from violent emotional impulses, as a distress added over and above the fears engendered by such emotions. If the anxiety increases enough, it would add its own deleterious effects both mental and physical (for the effects of emotions, according to St. Thomas, induce proportionately in the body what is felt in the mind.) It would cause depression and lethargy, lack of interest, oppression of feelings and imagination and resolution until thought and action become burdensome, and might proceed to the state of complete mental and physical torpor and even bodily disease.[22]

[19] *Ibid.*, q. 41, a. 4, on the kinds of fear.
[20] *Ibid.*, q. 44.
[21] *Ibid.*, q. 35, a. 8.
[22] *Ibid.*, q. 37.

The final turn of emotion in this situation is despair. Despair is the psychological rejection of something desirable, the giving up of something wanted. It implies a mental tearing away from something which is still loved and desired. The most painful of the passions, it is generated by fear and sorrow, when the mind is so thwarted by the realization or imagination of evils and dangers present and imminent that it abandons what it still longs for.[23]

In summary, the net effect of fear is a withdrawal of the soul's powers from their activity, with the expectation that the peril will pass. If the peril is not escapable, anxiety ensues, and this can be relieved only by the removal of the distressing agent, or perhaps by learning to tolerate it while finding relief in some other satisfactions. If the anxiety is intolerable and no relief can be found, a man can despair of the goods he was trying to hold, and, after the psychological injury involved in abandoning them, try to adjust himself to life without them.

Ordinarily with the passage of time, people can adjust themselves to painful and defeating experiences, especially as, when the pain has subsided, they can judge how they erred, prepare themselves to avoid a like disaster in the future, philosophize about their misfortune and learn, in short, to accept the experience. In a sense, they master the disagreeable experience, integrate it into their general mental and emotional patterns and maintain equilibrium.

The mastery of inescapably painful experiences, however, supposes a number of capabilities and opportunities. A man must have sufficient intelligence to grasp the nature of the experience, at least as it affects himself, so that he can mentally set himself for the appropriate reaction when it re-occurs. If something remains strange and unreasonable in the situation, there will still be, for him, a threat to safety, a warning to his helplessness. There must be, moreover, a certain relief sooner or later from the emotional distress occasioned by the incident. The passions must subside naturally. Finally there must be enough flexibility to take a loss, give up a satisfaction or substi-

[23] *Ibid.*, q. 40, a. 4.

tute another without jeopardizing the general sense of well-being.

These conditions for mastering a painful experience may be, however, lacking. The essential factor is an understanding of the situation sufficient to produce an acceptable adjustment.[24] The capacity to grasp a situation depends on many talents—a sufficient intelligence to see the present situation, a memory facile enough to recollect similar experiences and their remedies and results, some imagination and inventiveness, some capacity to reason these elements into a plan, some inspection of the circumstances and finally an effective judgment about what to do.

(2) *Inhibitory and traumatizing aspects of passion.*

Even if a man ordinarily has the initial mental capacity to grasp his experiences and master them, the opportunity to use it might fail him in a crisis, if the emotional component of the experience is violent. St. Thomas explains this from several points of view. In the first place, a strong emotion can, in effect, drain off the energy of the soul into its own production, and leave the other faculties, including the mind, memory and imagination, unable to operate. For the mind has a limited amount of psychic energy available at any time; a violent psychological action consumes it all for a while. In the second place, the intentions of the different faculties of the soul vary according to the force and vividness of their objects. (Intention in this context is the activity of a power vis-a-vis its object —the eye towards color, the imagination towards images, the intellect towards ideas, the will towards purposes, etc.) In normal circumstances, many faculties operate simultaneously, with some slight preponderance of intention wherever interest or attitude indicates. But an object which is " excessive," like a brilliant idea or a great love, fixes the intention of its faculty

[24] St. Thomas notes that a physical or corporeal evil shrinks when it is subjected to a reasonable analysis and judgment. Reason masters it by measuring it. See *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 42, a. 5 and ad 3.

so firmly that the soul will not operate through other faculties.[25] Thus a violent emotion or passion can absorb the soul, even to the loss of consciousness and will power, and even with a permanent effect.[26] In the third place, a violent emotion can injure the emotive power, the sense appetite, physically. Since, for St. Thomas, the passions are psychophysical actions, they belong to corporeal organs, and these organs can be injured by violent psychological movements. An injury renders the organ inoperative for a greater or lesser time, or operative only with pain.[27]

Thus, in the case of a violent emotion, a man is operating with a shocked psychological system, a consciousness partially

[25] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 77, a. 1. "For since all the powers of the soul are rooted in the one essence of the soul, it is necessary that when one power acts intensely, another acts remissly, or is even wholly impeded in its action. This happens both because every energy which is dispersed among many is made less; whence, on the other hand, when it is intensified for one thing, less can be spent for others, and also because a certain intention is required in the operations of the soul, which when it is vehemently applied to one thing, cannot attend vehemently to another." Cf. I-II, q. 33, a. 3, ad 2; II-II, q. 173, a. 3, ad 2.

[26] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 175, a. 1. "It should be noted that rapture implies a certain violence . . . thus the soul of man is said to be enraptured when it is abstracted from its sense perceptions . . . This abstraction can happen from a threefold cause . . . in one way, from a physical cause as happens in those who suffer alienation on account of some infirmity."

Ibid., a. 2. "In another way rapture can be considered in relation to its cause. And thus it can have its cause on the part of the appetitive power. For from the very fact that an appetite is affected vehemently towards something, it can happen that from the violence of the affect a man is alienated from everything else."

Ibid., ad 2. "Man can therefore be put outside himself in two ways, according to appetite. . . . In the other way, when, aside from the superior appetite, a man is totally absorbed in the things of the inferior appetite . . . when a man from the violence of the lower appetite is abstracted from the influence of the higher appetite, he is more abstracted from what is proper to him. Nevertheless, because there is no violence there, from the fact that the will can resist passion, it does not fulfill the true definition of rapture; unless perhaps the passion is so vehement that the use of reason is wholly taken away, as happens in those who go insane on account of the violence of anger or love."

[27] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 28, a. 5. "In regard to what is material in the passion of love, which is a physical transmutation, it happens that love may be injurious on account of an excessive transmutation; as happens in the sense (power) and in every act of a power of the soul which is exercised through some transmutation of a bodily organ."

or wholly disordered, and is at that time least able to consider, grasp and react to the situation evoking the shock. In psychoanalytic terms, he is traumatized. This would be the case with any excessive emotion, but is especially true with fear, sorrow and despair, which by their natures inhibit the natural and spontaneous movements of both mind and body.[28] The sum effect of these emotions is to withdraw a person from the situation, and even violently, and so inhibit a satisfactory response. This is an effect, not only of the initial pain of the experience, but also of the added distress these very passions cause.[29] Such psychological distress is more painful than physical injury, especially if it is sudden and unexpected, and if the recipient is sensitively disposed and inexperienced.[30]

(3) *Suppressive aspects of the passions.*

It would seem, however, that once the shock of a painful experience is over, the psychological system should gradually recover its normal dispositions and set about assimilating the disagreeable experience. The experience should not remain in the psyche like an undigested meal in the stomach. Often in fact people recover completely from such experiences. But it can also happen that the emotional reaction to the recollec-

[28] *Ibid.*, q. 37, a. 4. "It should be noted that in all the passions of the soul, the bodily transmutation which is material in them is conformed and proportioned to the appetitive motion, which is formal, as matter is proportioned to form in all things. Therefore those passions of the soul which imply an appetitive movement of seeking something, like love, joy, desire and the like, do not go against the vital processes by their nature. And therefore these help the nature of the body by their nature, but they could injure it by excess. But the passions which imply an appetitive motion which is withdrawal or a certain retraction, go against the vital processes not only if they are too great, but also by the nature of their movement. Thus it is with fear, and desperation, and especially sorrow, which weighs down the soul by an actual affliction . . ."

[29] See also Fenichel, *op. cit.*, p. 19. He reduces the causes of all neuroses to traumatizing and inhibiting factors. In the traumatic experience, it is the excessive quantity of initial excitation, entering the mental apparatus too rapidly to be mastered, which causes the difficulties. In cases of inhibition, forces preventing the normal responses and reactions to ordinary excitation cause emotional pressure to build up.

[30] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 35, a. 7; q. 42, a. 5.

tion of an experience inhibits its recall. If the recollection should renew the pain of the original, there would be a natural repugnance to renewing it in consciousness. If, moreover, the sense appetites themselves have been injured by the violence of their initial reaction, any fresh reaction will be doubly painful, like moving a sprained limb, and rather than suffer again, the victim will thrust the experience away from recollection. Nor need this be a conscious and deliberate rejection, any more than favoring a torn ligament need always be deliberate.

In some cases it is evident that the rejection of a memory from consciousness is not a consciously willed act, for conscious attention and control are themselves disordered, as in instances in which a severe psychological shock causes insanity or more or less complete amnesia. Even, however, if there is no apparent distortion of consciousness from an experience producing deep anxiety and fear, a person might yet inwardly and wholly unconsciously rebel against reliving it in memory, especially if it were violent enough to threaten and produce a sense of panic (St. Thomas' agony) either abruptly or over a period of time. This psychological helplessness or defeat, the threatened overthrow and failure of rational mastery, whether sudden or progressively developed, is an experience not willingly risked a second time. Even the suggestion of a repetition is enough to produce a fear strong enough to block off the emergence of the distressing recollection into consciousness, strong enough even to check completely the train of thought or imagery that might lead to a revival of the fear-inducing memory. Freud frequently noted how the emotions can turn aside and check a flow of images dangerous to the ego's repose. In the psychology of St. Thomas, this function would be considerably sharpened by the far quicker and more subtle action of the intellect. The intellect moves more rapidly than the imagination, and with deeper penetration into the significance of situations, and can directly influence the course of images in the imagination, as well as indirectly stimulate or block them by moving the appetites. Moreover, when the intellect moves the sense appetites, by moving the will, and through the will stirs up fear

or anxiety, the action is too subtle to enter consciousness except perhaps after careful introspection.

In summary, people can deeply fear the fact that a painful experience happened to them, and easily come to deny that it really did happen, and believe this denial,[31] and by the fear and anxiety the suggestion of its recall arouses, prevent the memory of it from rising into consciousness. And since no one is ever wholly conscious of all the contents presented to him by mind, imagination, senses, appetites, etc., one can continually pass over some phases of them, particularly when this intense fear impedes the unfettered and candid use of reason,[32] and intense concentration on one facet of psychological content wholly prevents the notice of another.[33] And this can all be done unconsciously, or at least with not much more entering the consciousness than a vague and indefinable uneasiness when certain topics are touched upon.[34]

Finally, even if there were some half-consciousness of the initial rejections of distressing experiences, habituation would make them wholly unconscious. The habituation considered here is not that which produces perfect habits in the fullest sense of the term, for these habits are produced deliberately and consciously, and remain subject to conscious and deliberate use. This habituation is more like that which St. Thomas describes when he speaks of the development of physical skills, like writing or playing a musical instrument, when complex series of actions become learned so well that they can be performed unconsciously. In this case, however, it is not a pattern

[31] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 29, a. 5, how men can hate the truth, and II-II, q. 162, a. 3, ad 2, how men can easily believe what they urgently desire to believe.

[32] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 77, a. 7. Vehement emotions either wholly or partly impede the use of reason.

[33] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 173, a. 3. Intense concentration in the imagination or mind can abstract a man from the senses, and vice versa. It is noteworthy that, while St. Thomas did not treat the phenomena of psychopathology *ex professo*, he did discuss some of the effects of violence on the psyche in his treatises on prophecy, rapture and other supra-normal phenomena, and he noted the analogies between these states and disordered states of mind.

[34] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 80, a. 2. People are quick to respond to even the slightest references to things which affect their feelings deeply.

of activities which becomes learned more or less deliberately, but a pattern of emotional reaction, which becomes "learned," not by deliberate plan but by default of any plan. For the will can direct the sense appetites, not only by deliberately stirring them up, but also by allowing them free play once they have been stirred up by some other object.[35] Whether they have been allowed this free play, or whether they have seized it from the control of the will by their violence, they distort judgment, preventing the mind from reasoning clearly; if this becomes habitual, they will regularly render the mind unconscious towards some of its potential contents. St. Thomas points out that this kind of habituation can blind men permanently to conclusions of the natural law, which are ordinarily evident to all.[36] In summary, then, the effect of passions habitually tolerated is unconsciously to make the mind unconscious of contents it, nevertheless, actually contains.

(4) *Unconscious Activity of Intellect and Imagination.*

Granting, then, that the mind can unconsciously reject and suppress memories of past experiences, and anything associated with these memories, what is the fate of these suppressed thoughts and images? According to Freud, these mental contents continue to be active in the unconscious part of the mind; this was one of the features of his psychology which met with early and strong protest from experimental psychologists. It seemed to the latter that the active processes of the mind—reasoning, thinking, associating images, creative phantasy, etc., —necessarily demanded the conscious application of the mind and that "unconscious thought" was a contradiction in terms. Some psychologists were, however, not at all reluctant to recognize the possibility of "unconscious thought" and certainly it is not alien to St. Thomas' system.

[35] I-II, q. 74, a. 6.

[36] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 94, a. 4. The conclusions from the common principles of the natural law are unknown to some because they "have a reason depraved by passion, that is, by bad custom, or by a bad disposition of nature." *Ibid.*, q. 94, a. 6: "In regard to other secondary precepts, the natural law can be erased from the hearts of men . . . on account of bad customs and corrupt habits, as robbery was not considered sinful among some, or even vices against nature."

St. Thomas recognized that the intellect as well as the imagination works during sleep, even reasoning out new thoughts [37] and receiving new impressions sometimes more subtly than when a man is fully conscious.[38] Moreover the thoughts and phantasies even in unconscious states are driven or drawn by loves and desires, just as dreams in sleep will turn towards the things which already attract the appetites.[39] Moreover, when consciousness is dimmed in sleep or even entirely lost by insanity, the imagination continues to form new images, basing these creations on the data originally apprehended by the senses,[40] or producing new images to represent or signify a physical feeling or disposition.[41] It might be argued that these are not really thoughts or products of the imagination as usually conceived, since they lack direction and purpose.

[37] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 154, a. 5, ad 3. "It should be said that the apprehension of reason is not impeded by sleep as is its judgment, which is perfected by turning to sensibles, which are the first principles of human thought. And therefore nothing prevents man's reason from apprehending something new during sleep, either from the relicts of previous thoughts and from images presented, or even from divine revelation. . . ."

[38] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 172, a. 1, ad 1. "It should be said that the soul when it is abstracted from corporeal things is made more apt for perceiving the influence of spiritual substances, and even for perceiving the subtle movements which are left in the imagination from the impressions of natural causes, which the soul is impeded from perceiving when it is occupied with sensibles." Ad 2: "Such impressions can be made better in those who are sleeping than in those who are awake, because the soul of one awake is occupied about exterior sensibles, whence it can less perceive the subtle impressions either of spiritual substances or even of natural causes."

[39] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 80, a. 2. In sleep, the blood gathering around the internal senses was thought to be the cause of arousing dreams. And the dreams aroused passions, which in turn strengthened the dream perception, for, as Aristotle had remarked, "Lovers are moved by a least likeness to apprehend the thing loved."

[40] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 173, a. 2. "Moreover in the imagination are not only the forms of sensible things as they are taken in by the senses, but a transformation takes place (in them) in different ways, either on account of some bodily change, as happens in those who are asleep or insane, or even by the command of the reason."

[41] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 95, a. 6. "Sometimes indeed the internal cause of dreams is physical. For from the internal disposition of the body some movement is formed in the imagination, corresponding to that disposition. Thus a man in whom there are abundant cold humors dreams that he is in water or snow." See also II-II, q. 154, a. 5, for physical causes of sexual dreams.

The point, however, is that even lacking conscious direction and purpose, the mind and the imagination are forming new contents, making new apprehensions, exciting new passions, arriving at new results, and not entirely by chance.

That even the external movements of the body can be governed by these unconscious or half-conscious mental activities, even when a man is awake and mentally normal, is also evident. These external movements are the *actus hominis* of St. Thomas, the material on which Freud based his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*.[42] And not only can a man perform indeliberate actions prompted by an internal mental action and content of which he is not at the time aware, but he can also, according to St. Thomas, deliberately perform an action on the basis of one principle without even considering other principles which he knows well, and which would forbid or modify the action.[43] It does not seem difficult, in these terms, to recognize that St. Thomas' psychology has a place for "unconscious thought," both intellectual and imaginative, and consequently for unconscious motivation and action. If unconscious thought and imagery turn on distressing experiences unresolved, on unfulfilled desires and inhibited instincts, on natural impulses denied natural satisfaction, the roots of psychological disturbances are planted. If these elements, which are the essential elements of complex formation according to Freud's concept, are acceptable from the point of view of Thomistic psychology, a complex can be interpreted in traditional terms.

This interpretation is fortified when it is noted that, as a complex is said to be the root of mental and emotional disorders by psychoanalysis, so the factors in St. Thomas' psychology, as given above, from which a Thomistic notion of

[42] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 74, a. 7. ". . . The apprehension of the imaginative power is sudden and without deliberation: and therefore it can cause some action before the superior or inferior reason even have time to deliberate." I-II, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3: "Actions of this kind (*actus hominis*) are not properly human because they do not proceed from the deliberation of reason, which is the proper principle of human acts. And therefore they have as end something imagined, not, however, an end established by reason."

[43] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 74, a. 7, ad 3.

complex has been derived, are also those factors St. Thomas relates to mental disorder. It is the excess of the passions which leads to insanity, to melancholy and mania, to states of stupefaction in which one can neither think nor move.[44] The state of mind of a person who has suffered a rebellion of the sense appetite from the control of reason and will power, is a state of alienation from the senses, either wholly or partially, in which state imagination and passion take over control, and whatever imagination presents is taken for reality.[45]

There can be no doubt that the effects of excessive fear, anxiety and despair are psychologically bad and, all else being equal, morally harmful. To live with mental blocks, with some painful experiences and memories unconsciously suppressed, under a more or less continuous emotional strain, with normal thought and judgment to some extent impaired is sufficient disability. Often enough, however, since the mind is continually at work, the early complications develop consciously or unconsciously until more or less complete disability results. It is the value of psychoanalytic therapy that it sets out, using the technique of free association, to unravel the knots which unconsciously bind the mind, seeking to get behind the psychological barriers and to prepare the way for self-understanding and self-mastery. This is no more than another way of saying that it serves to secure the personal dignity and maturity which are the foundations and dispositions for Christian virtue. Unquestionably, the technique has succeeded. This is not to say that psychoanalysis is the only successful technique, or that it succeeds in all cases, but only that it has succeeded well enough and often enough to compel acceptance as a tried and proven therapy.

[44] Cf. I-II, q. 37, a. 2; q. 37, a. 4 and ad 3; II-II, q. 175, aa. 1, 2, and ad 2.

[45] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 173, a. 3 and ad 2. Dr. Fenichel closely relates sense appetite and neurotic phenomena in this way: "Much of the given characterization of neurotic phenomena seems valid also for a category of very normal mental phenomena, namely, of affective or emotional spells. Actually a search for a common denominator for all sudden outburst of affect reveals a close relationship between outbursts of this kind and neurotic phenomena." *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

C. The Morality of Free Association

In this context the question of the morality of free association must be considered. To restate the problem: the psychoanalytic session using free association places a patient in the occasion of sins against personal purity. There is danger that he might acquiesce in sexual phantasies, or give consent to the pleasure of them, or to sexual desires. The Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, has indicated that the use of psychoanalysis is not forbidden because of these dangers, but that a line must be drawn between forbidden and tolerable dangers.

The first question concerns the principles of solution. It does not seem to me that the question can be answered simply in terms of the indeliberateness of the mental contents produced in the process of free association. It is true that the feelings and images which may arise in the process are not deliberately evoked, expressly excited by voluntary action—such voluntariety is precisely what is not wanted in free association. It is true also that the patient is in a state comparable to semi-somnolence, with his powers of voluntary control in same degree disengaged.[46] Nevertheless, as has been pointed out, since the patient deliberately enters the analytic session, and willingly relaxes control over his ideas and emotions, whatever is produced is indirectly voluntary, and morally imputable insofar as it could be foreseen. Not everything then that arises can be tolerated merely because it was not deliberately aroused.

Neither would it be possible, it seems, to justify the unlimited use of free association simply on the grounds that a sin committed in an analytic session would be only a material sin, since the patient lacked practical appreciation of what he was doing. For material sins cannot be tolerated if there is any way to avoid them, and if the patient could not avoid them by using voluntary judgment during the session, he might well refuse to begin analysis at all. Probably the patient could avoid immoral thoughts and feelings during the session, but

[46] See Nuttin, *op. cit.*, pp. 159 ff. Also, Henri Gratton, O.M.I., "Résponsibilité et abréactions psychoanalytiques," *La Vie Spirituelle, Supplément*, No. 41 (1957), pp. 211 ff.

to the detriment of the analysis. It would be hard, however, to recommend analysis if he could not.

It would seem, then, that as the use of free association is generally justifiable on the principle of double effect, the more detailed rules for guidance in a psychoanalytic session should be developed from the same principle. According to the principle, while evil may never be done that good come of it, a good thing may sometimes be done even if some evil should also result. The good effect intended by psychoanalysis is, as has been said, the mental health and emotional stability, and sometimes also the physical health, of the patient. There is more to this than merely the relief of mental distress, although this is by no means a small matter. There are ways of thinking and acting which ennoble men, ways in which human dignity and personal worth are actualized and almost made tangible. These were described recently by Fr. A. Plé, O. P., in words which are worth noting.[47] These actions are the perfectly human acts according to St. Thomas' definition of a human act. They are fundamentally rational actions, whose object and purpose are grasped by the intelligence as truly good, sought by the will because their particular goodness has a universal quality, is "open" toward supreme Goodness. Therefore these acts are perfectly ordered, hierarchic, rationally organized. They are chosen with a free and elective love, without shadow of falsehood or unruled passion clouding the choice; they are true acts of virtue; they lead to peace and joy, and to perfect happiness. These are the actions in which men are most truly a little less than the angels. Father Plé sums this up in these words:

> Only through human acts does man act as man. Moreover, it is through these acts that that which specifies him, and which is at birth only potential, becomes actual. Man constructs himself performing these human acts, which little by little, multiplying themselves, build up the organism of the virtues, through which the subject is more and more disposed to act as man, and through which all that is in him becomes integrated. Each human act puts a little more order in our chaotic richness; this order consists in an

[47] "L'acte moral et la 'pseudo-morale' le l'inconscient," *La Vie Spirituelle, Supplément*, No. 40, (1957).

interior harmonization of our tendencies, each one playing its role in harmony with all the others; each and every one succeeding in this only by exercising their common finality, which is to relate the subject to another, that is to say, to God.[48]

The strains and impediments of mental and emotional blocks are hostile to such free and reasonable human activity. The purpose of psychoanalysis is perhaps only to undo psychological stress, repair the damage done by psychological strains, but its effect is also to free a patient for fuller participation in truly human activity. This must be weighed, when we are judging the good effects of analysis.

The bad effect is, as has been said, the dangers of sins against personal purity, especially the danger of consent to internal sins.

When we consider the four conditions which make it lawful to perform an action with a double effect, it is clear, first of all, that the action directly and immediately intended is good, or at least, morally indifferent. As far as the products of free association are cognitive, they are indifferent: thoughts, images, memories in themselves are never morally bad, even when they represent bad actions. However, in an analytic session, it is important to know the emotional reaction which accompanies these thoughts and images, and so the appetitive response to them is a part of what the patient must allow and report. Insofar as these responses are indeliberate, they are also morally indifferent; they would only become morally bad if they obtained voluntary consent as objects of sexual pleasure or desire in themselves. This consent, of course, is not required for a successful analysis; in fact, as will be mentioned below, it would probably impede it. The whole, then, of the content which should be allowed for a good analysis is morally indifferent.

Secondly, the good effect of analysis, which is the understanding of himself and the mastery of his feelings and impulses, which the patient obtains, does not flow from the danger of giving consent to internal sins, and much less from actually

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

acquiescing in them. There is no question here of doing evil for the sake of good. The contents which come to mind in an analysis are simply material from which the patient's mental constitution can be analysed and understood, material which could also, but quite aside from the main intention, be used sinfully. As far as this goes, no more is being allowed to a patient than is ordinarily allowed to a student of medicine or morality. In these cases, it is acknowledged that, although the matters dealt with may be sexually exciting, the student may continue to study them in spite of the excitement for the sake of the benefits to be obtained from the knowledge.

Thirdly, the bad effect, i. e., temptation to consent to sin, is not intended. This seems to me to be a particularly important point. It is evident that, if the analyst and patient engaged in a session have a sound theological understanding of sex, they will certainly want to avoid any sin in that area. But it also seems valid to say that a sound theory of psychoanalysis would similarly seek to avoid such aberrations. If the purpose of analysis is not only to relieve distress but also to prepare a patient for fully human, free, and responsible activity, it would defeat its purpose if it condoned interior consent to interior disorders, and achieve its purpose only by enabling its patients to master their emotions. This does not seem to have been Freud's position, but, in addition to denying the validity of the moral order, he does not seem to have credited psychoanalysis with more than a negative role, the cure of mental distress. Contemporary psychoanalysis, even when it disclaims the responsibility of actively and positively contributing to personal and moral growth, often recognizes that its own work should lead to and be conditioned by the ulterior motive.[49] It would seem then that an analyst who understood the moral law as a guide line for human behavior, rooted in human nature, could freely accept a moral prohibition as an analytic

[49] Father Nuttin cites Sandor Ferenczi, Otto Rank, and Franz Alexander as three of Freud's disciples who developed the idea that psychoanalysis should provide the patient with a reconstruction of his conscious ego, whereby he could find a positive solution to the emotional conflicts of daily life. See *Psychoanalysis and Personality*, pp. 31, 75.

prohibition, a moral transgression as a psychoanalytic mistake. Certainly one who did so would run no danger of intending in any way the evil effect of the two effects which treatment may involve.[50]

Fourthly and finally, the principle of double effect demands that a good cause proportionate to the evil risked be present. If, for instance, the good effect which medical doctors and patients secure even at the risk sometimes of sexual excitement justifies the physical examinations they perform and undergo, so also the good effect analysts secure for mental patients justifies these psychological examinations, and the more so as mental disease is more crippling and distressing than physical disease, and mental health more prized than bodily health. This conclusion is strengthened when we realize that many of the bad effects of an analytic session would occur even without it, for people who are disturbed by emotional difficulties, especially if the sexual impulse is involved, are often unable to control their feelings in any event. Moreover, the influence of the analyst must be taken into consideration. While, as will be mentioned below, his role may sometimes entail special difficulties for the patient, his general position as confidant, friend, guide, and symbol of moral strength and authority, tend to make temptations to internal sins of the kind we are dealing with now, more remote. Since the matter of these temptations, the phantasies and feelings, is being continually reported to him as to a man of knowledge and sympathy, whose authoritative consideration is being sought in the difficulties they present, it would take an express change of attitude, and to an attitude not consonant with the presence of the analyst, for these materials to become proximate occasions of consent.

In conclusion, then, it seems that the following rules can be used for moral guidance regarding the use of free association.

[50] Father Nuttin, *ibid.*, pp. 146-148, enlarges on this point of view under the title: "The Therapeutic Value of Immoral Ways of Conduct." There are certainly different and difficult problems in this area, which will require much study before all the apparent conflicts between the rules of sound morality and the exigencies, or seeming exigencies, of treatment are resolved. There can be no doubt, however, that ultimately there is no real conflict.

Psychoanalysis can always be undertaken, when it seems psychologically advisable. If in the course of analysis, the patient does not in fact give consent to interior sins by reason of the analysis, the analysis can continue without any fear of moral wrong. If the patient is doubtful about whether or not he has given consent to internal sins, or if he has sometimes certainly sinned and is doubtful about other times, he should be informed, or re-informed, and encouraged to make use of the normal means for rendering proximate occasions remote, and the analysis can continue. This would be a case where direct appeal is made to the conscious and rational motives, to strengthen the powers of the soul through which the patient still exercises rational control, to overcome the dangers the analytic session entails. If, however, the patient always or almost always gives voluntary consent to the temptations to sin which occur in an analytic session, it would seem that the analysis ought to cease. This is a moral judgment, but if our conclusions about the nature of psychoanalysis as given above are valid, it is also a psychoanalytic judgment. Any patient who uses a psychoanalytic session as an ordinary source of sexual pleasure is complicating his condition faster than he is helping it.

The general conclusion could be stated in the following terms, if they will not be misunderstood: psychoanalysis can be continued without moral fault as long as it is psychologically beneficial. I frame the conclusion in these terms because in these terms an analyst and a patient might feel more confident in making a practical judgment. However, the only analyst or patient who could validly accept this conclusion is the one who also concedes that an interior sin is a psychological disorder as well as a moral fault.

Before leaving this point, a final note of explanation ought to be added. The discussion above was written with sexual sins in mind; the occurrence of other sins, e. g., hatred, spite, rash judgment, fear, and so on were not taken into account. The reason for this is that the moral advice generally applicable to temptations to these sins is different from that in the case

of sexual sins. For the latter, the advice is: flee from temptation. The problems arise when for one reason or another we have to risk the temptations deliberately. Sins, however, which are rooted in hostility or fear are best combatted not by retreat, but by exposing their features and roots as far as possible, and by, as it were, seeing through them, or seeing them in their proper perspective, in the light of justice and charity. They evidently do not present problems of double effect.

D. Abreaction

A psychological phenomenon which occurs in analytic sessions and which warrants special consideration is the phenomenon called abreaction. The exact nature of this process is much controverted but certain features are generally recognized. The term "abreaction" was invented by Freud to signify a working-off of a strong emotional force, the relief of psychological tension by an emotional discharge. It is applied to emotional reactions which occur in analytic sessions (or when a person is under hypnosis or drugs, or sometimes even in ordinary situations), and which are characterized by a marked disproportion between the apparent cause of the emotion and the vehemence of its response. Although the onset of abreaction is often marked by a certain sense of anxiety, its quality and quantity come as a surprise to the person affected.

When it comes to assigning a cause for the disproportionate degree of emotional reaction, explanations vary according to various theories of emotion. What is generally accepted is that the excessive quantity of effect is somehow explicable in terms of the psychological complexes which have been touched upon, long-standing inhibitions having been circumvented so that suppressed feelings are being released. Whether or not there is any therapeutic value to abreaction is also controverted, but it is generally credited with being at least a sign indicative of some important, and hitherto buried, psychological matter.

Abreaction has frequently been compared to the classic catharsis of feelings, or to the emotional relief which is occa-

sioned by confession or unburdening oneself to a friend, and the like. It has special features, however, which are definable in the light of the particular circumstances in which it takes place. These special features are principally two: the semi-detached state of consciousness which characterizes the analytic session, and the special relationship of the patient towards the analyst. It seems that the relaxation of voluntary direction and the unique nature of the trust and confidence the patient enjoys toward the analyst, allow the former to resuscitate experiences which have been hitherto strongly blocked, or make him feel strong enough to permit memories, which have previously been rigidly suppressed, to emerge into consciousness.

But there are several kinds of abreaction. Some occur when a buried experience is brought up into consciousness, or perhaps when a cognitive insight is gained into that experience. Usually the emotional reaction is an outburst of hostility or affection, i.e., of hatred or of love, and if it is of love, there is usually a sexual component. Other reactions, such as fear, grief or laughter are also possible. Similar but distinct is the abreaction which founds the phenomenon of transfer. Transfer is a phenomenon of the psychoanalytic session (considered absolutely essential by Freudians) which entails a disproportionate placement of affection and trust in the analyst, who assumes the role of symbol or surrogate for a parent or other authority figure.[51] The affections once turned toward the parent are "transferred" to the analyst. The efficacy of psychoanalysis depends in large part on the nature of this transference. There are, of course, many subtleties involved in transference, e.g., the part it plays in helping the patient to overcome his own resistances, the light that the very form of the transference throws on the patient's mental structures, etc. Here we are interested only in the aspect under which it is capable of comparison with abreaction—the disproportion between the affect and the object.

[51] Transfer is not a phenomenon confined to the analytic situation. Since its original description in psychoanalytical terms, it has been recognized as a phenomenon which may occur in any personal relationships, whenever a present situation is responded to in terms of a past relationship.

Besides the transfer proper to the analytic session, another kind of transference occurs sometimes, which is termed lateral transference. This happens, when, in the course of treatment, and probably because of the depth analysis, the patient feels sudden and otherwise inexplicable emotional reactions to members of his family or friends or associates. This is a phenomenon which might have a marked effect on the patient's social life, and entails certain moral problems as well.

The theoretical explanations of abreaction are various. Freud held that it was a discharge of hitherto blocked-up emotional energy, analogous to the electrical discharge which follows the grounding of a high-voltage terminal. According to him, instinctual impulses are continually and spontaneously being generated in a living body, as psychological counterparts or manifestations of physiological energy. These instincts are not aroused by external objects, or by thoughts or images of external objects, but after they are generated, attach themselves to the images of the objects and activities which would release them by overt action. By such actions, the organism obtains relief from the psychological pressure (pain) produced by such affective impulses. If, however, the activity by which release and relief are obtainable is prohibited for some reason (e. g., social disfavor) and the images of the activity become suppressed (because this disfavor is painful), the emotional energy attached to them cannot find release, and builds up in the unconscious.[52] When in the analytic session this buried image is unearthed, its emotional content bursts forth and is worked off—an abreaction.

Freud did not develop this theory of abreaction to any great extent, nor did he give it much prominence in his therapy. He did much work, however, on transference. Other psychologists[53] took up the previous notion and expanded it, although they were not always content with Freud's theoretical

[52] See "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes," *Collected Papers of Sigmund Freud*, IV, 62-70.

[53] For example, Dr. O. Pfister, Professor William McDougall, Carl Jung, Dr. William Brown.

explanations. These apparently struck them as overly mechanistic (the analogy with an electric circuit was too rigid) and unappreciative of the positive values of emotions. Naturally enough they tried to coordinate an explanation with their own general theories of emotion and affect. For our purposes here, however, it seems sufficient to make one or two theoretical conclusions without attempting an integral explanation.

First of all, as has been said, the emotional act in an abreaction differs from normal affectivity in at least one major respect. Normally, an emotional response is proportioned to the object arousing it, not indeed by a mathematical ratio, but by a varying proportion depending on the dispositions and circumstances of the individual, but within recognizable limits. To feel hostility towards someone who is threatening you with an injury is a normal response, conditioned indeed by your respective strengths, the amount of injury threatened, your dispositions of health, fatigue, etc., at the time, and so on. A fairly wide range of emotional response would not appear outside normalcy. However, to feel a sense of vehement hostility towards someone who in no way threatens any harm, or who offers some benefit, calls for an explanation outside the usual framework of emotional analysis. The adequate explanation must include a definition of the psychological tangle, the inhibitions, the unconscious impulsion. Whatever the general theoretical position, the quantity of emotion involved must be accounted for by something other than the simple object-appetite relationship.

It does not, however, seem necessary to view the matter in terms of simple discharge of blocked emotions actually accumulated in the unconscious; there may be sufficient explanation based on more traditional principles of emotional theory. When any person remembers a past danger, it might excite a degree of anxiety; when he begins to recall a painful experience which once before (perhaps when he was a child and relatively helpless) overcame him with emotional violence, and caused a condition of panic and confusion even the memory of which he has never been able to tolerate, the danger is now not wholly of

the past. There is a danger here and now from the violence of the revived affect. This, then, is a recall he will strongly inhibit; if he is suddenly and unexpectedly made conscious of this memory in an analytic session, he may well react with a paroxysm of fear, dismay, hostility and confusion and then direct his feelings towards anyone present. This is not, therefore, so much a release of emotional energy accumulated in the past as a reaction, perhaps even of injured faculties, to an affective impulse intolerable in its present aspects. The object feared and hated is not the object that threatened in the past, but the vehemence of emotion its memory image can still arouse in the present. If this emotion was not governable the first time, and if it was inhibited and therefore untried ever since, there can be no confidence in its being governable in the present. The same explanation could be valid for a violent and unnerving sexual impulse once aroused and never adequately mastered. Whatever the theoretical position adopted, however, the important point is that in abreaction the emotional act is more significant than its apparent object, and that the quantity of act derives from an unconscious source.

Not only is the intimate nature of abreaction open to discussion, its therapeutic value is also a matter of controversy. Some have held that abreaction is the cure, or at least the essential part. Once the blocked emotion has been worked off, the source of the psychological disturbance has been removed. Others have pointed out that abreaction gives only a temporary relief, and sometimes none at all. It may even cause an increase in the psychic difficulties being treated. Others again have held that it is in itself of indifferent merit as far as the cure goes, but may contribute something accidentally, either because it assists the patient in overcoming his resistance to a buried experience and so enables him to recall it fully, or, and more important, because it indicates to both patient and analyst that a matter of great importance has been brought to consciousness. The majority of analysts agree that it is not the emotional release itself that is of moment, but the recognition of the source which occasions it, and the insight and acceptance

of the material brought to light, and its meaningful integration into a fuller conception of the self.

Again, for the purposes of moral judgment, it is not entirely necessary to precise the exact therapeutic value of an abreaction. Whether it is essential to a cure or rather, as seems more likely, only incidental and ancillary, the fact of its occurrence must be taken into account. What is, I believe, more important, is the question of the moral judgment that must be passed on the abreaction itself. If it is, in itself, morally indifferent, it will not matter whether it is essential or accidental to therapy.

E. The Morality of Abreaction

There is, I believe, no question of formal sin in an abreaction taken in itself. It is an emotional outburst, unforeseen and strong enough to reach considerable intensity before reason can pass a judgment. It seems to have, therefore, the essential characteristics of the *actus primo primi*, differing only from the common notion of this act in its exceptional intensity and in the consequence of this, that it can move or imperate speech and action. Although the *actus primo primi* is generally considered as a simple and unmodified movement of sensuality, there is no reason to restrict the concept in this way. St. Thomas speaks of the sensuality (the root of the sense appetites) as chaotic, unsusceptible to the rule of reason and the impress of virtue, and confusedly irascible and concupiscible, but he does not negate the possibility that it be affected with habits by other psychological acts. Any faculty with an element of potentiality and indifference in it is open to modification. An abreaction would seem to be a movement of sensuality, but from a sensuality which has been predisposed and even distorted, by previous vehement acts of sensuality; a sensuality, therefore, which when it does erupt suddenly can erupt more vehemently and with some predetermined bias.

That an *actus primo primi* can imperate an overt response is, of course, not new. Granting that the will normally has more absolute control of the powers of speech and movement than

of the emotions, it is not impossible for this to slip occasionally or be lost temporarily under stress of emotion, even while consciousness is not lost.

As a psychological phenomenon, therefore, it seems that abreaction, like any motion of the sense appetites, is morally neutral, taking its moral species insofar as it might be deliberately induced or permitted by some act of the will.

There are, then, three moral problems which must be considered in connection with abreaction. (1) Granting its intrinsic neutrality, is it nevertheless *per se* morally evil because it necessarily involves loss of the use of reason? (2) If this is not so, what is the probability of internal consent, subsequent to the emotional impulse, and sinful if the impulse is evil? (3) What moral judgment must be passed on overt actions proceeding from abreactions, with a more or less definable degree of responsibility and more or less serious consequences?

(1) It is not impossible that an abreaction should actually usurp rational control, not merely in the sense of providing a strong, unconsciously motivated impulse to some action or desire, but formally, in the sense that the patient would lose reasoning command of his actions and be wholly dominated by the abreaction affect. Such a situation could never be directly intended by analyst or patient even as a temporary state, nor could analysis itself be recommended if such loss of the use of reason was foreseen with any degree of certainty. This is one of the situations which the Holy Father has condemned as intrinsically evil.

(2) Such cases, however, would seem to be exceptional, and even from the point of view of therapy, extremely undesirable. What is much more common is an outburst of affect which is strong but not overpowering. The liceity of permitting such impulses is the same as permitting a double effect, not essentially different from the cases mentioned above.[54] The only

[54] Father André Snoek has considered these problems on the basis of the simple distinction between formal and material sin, and has reached his conclusion that abreaction is morally permissible on the grounds that the patient in the course of abreaction is mentally dissociated from his emotional reactions, so that he is not

reason for treating abreaction separately is because it might seem that the problem of consent is more difficult. For while giving consent might be improbable in the cases of thoughts, phantasies and ordinary desires, it seems to be a much more proximate danger in the case of impulses of the force of an abreaction.

In some cases, of course, there is no problem: if the impulse is itself of such a nature that consent is not sinful, e. g., an emotional outburst of joy or amazement. The impulse is, of course, unreasonable since there is no apparent justification for it, but it is hard to see how it could be morally wrong even if one deliberately willed it.

But if the impulse is one which would constitute a formal sin if consented to or unchecked, for example, an impulse of aggressiveness or libido, the problem remains. In brief: would a patient who went through an abreaction of these emotions be likely to consent to the satisfactions they offer? Would he voluntarily accept the phantasies and impulses to injure someone and the relief this acceptance might bring him, or voluntarily acquiesce in the sexual images and impulses and the pleasures and satisfactions these might afford?

Any particular case would have to be judged on its own merits, of course, but it seems to me that the presumption stands against the probability of consent. Something can be said for the fact that the patient is in a mental attitude in which any voluntary commitment is partly impeded by the relaxed and quasi-somnolent character induced in the analytic session,[55] but of greater significance in his actual, positive attitude towards the analytic session itself and the psychological reactions which occur in it. He does not have the attitude of one who is seeking the real objects and actions which are

at the time responsibly committed to them. For the complete discussion, see André Snoek, S. J., "Moral Reflections on Psychiatric Abreaction," *Theological Studies*, XIII (1952), 173-189.

[55] Father Henri Gratton, O. M. I., discusses the several layers of the unconscious and the differing degrees of voluntariety associated with them and founds his judgment on the moral lawfulness of permitting abreaction to a considerable extent on these factors. *Op. cit.*, pp. 211 ff.

being represented by his phantasies and exciting his emotions. Actually he is seeking the phantasies and feelings in themselves, because they lie at the root of the psychological disturbances he is trying to uncover in order to resolve. He is bringing these mental contents to the fore, not for the innate satisfactions they might offer, but for their possible meanings in relation to his difficulties.[56]

Normally an emotion is a force preambulatory to action or rest—it drives towards the object which arouses it and rests in the object when it is secured by the action—the movement from desire to complacency. The emotions are propelling agents between the object perceived and the object accomplished. Since they are powerful agents, it is morally unwise to permit them to gain a psychological foothold when it is a question of unlawful actions. Nevertheless, the immorality comes, not primarily from the emotional movement, but from the unlawfulness of the subject-object relationship. The desire to injure this man unjustly is not sinful because it is a desire but because it is an injustice. Similarly, the sexual desire for some person other than a spouse is not unlawful because it is a desire, but because it is outside a marriage bond. Now in an abreaction, the subject-object relationship is in the background. The patient is not primarily interested in what he is going to do or how he is going to react to this or that person. The focus of his interest is on the emerging affect and its representations, and on the question of why he should be so affected by such representations. Granting that the patient is in some way "reliving" his experiences, he is not reliving them merely to recapture the echoes of their satisfactions, as, for instance, in a case of morose delectation. He is reliving them to recapture them as psychological phenomena which were not handled adequately the first time they were experienced.[57] This attitude

[56] See Nuttin, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-153, where this point of view is developed at length.

[57] St. Thomas uses these distinctions in many places, in reference to the different intentions we can have towards a single psychological phenomenon. For example, we can view an image in the imagination as a psychic picture, or as a representative of the past, or, looking through it, see the real thing it represents.

towards abreacted affects would tend to make the likelihood of consent to the psychological satisfactions they offer considerably more remote.

Moreover the patient is undergoing these experiences not on his own instance but in the presence of a " spectator " whose interest is also to understand, to guide and to cure.

Neither can it be forgotten that these mental contents were suppressed contents, and suppressed for a reason. The suppression might have been both unconscious and psychologically unsound, but its force represents the position of the consciously active part of the mind. These matters were suppressed because they represented impulses to forbidden satisfactions, forbidden so absolutely in fact that the conscious mind could not tolerate even the thought of their possibility, and, reacting with a subrational and animal antipathy, failed to master them on sound and reasonable bases. This original rejection gives at least a clue to the mind's conscious attitude towards these matters, and this attitude is the opposite of consent. It would seem then that unless there were ample evidence to the contrary, the probability of consent to unlawful impulses in abreaction is remote.

One last point remains in this connection, namely the degree or quantity of affective outburst which is morally lawful, always excluding consent, of course. It has been pointed out, for instance, that the sexual affect released in the process of abreaction may be strong enough to ensue in a complete physical reaction. Moralists are generally agreed that, distressing as this is, it is morally tolerable for grave reasons such as the study and practice of medicine, morality, art, and even animal breeding. Since the ends of psychoanalysis are equally grave, it would be lawful even if it occasioned these extremes of sexual disturbance.[58]

(3) The final problem to be considered is the problem of

[58] Cf. J. A. McHugh and C. J. Callan, *Moral Theology* (Revised ed.; New York: Wagner, 1958), II, ## 2536-2538; Noldin, *Summa Theologicae Moralis* (Editio XXV; Oeniponte: F. Rauch, 1937), I, De Sexto Praecepto, # #37, 49, 55, 59 and 61.

overt and express actions and words resulting from the emotional impulse of abreaction. The actions we are particularly interested in are those which express hostility or sexual affection, and these occur principally along the lines formed by the phenomenon of transfer. As has been said, although some person, either the analyst or some other close associate in the case of lateral transfer, is the apparent object of these emotional responses and the actions they prompt, the " real " and adequate cause of the impulse is a buried and unconscious memory of some person for whom the apparent object is a surrogate. The unconsciously motivated hatred or rebellion or affection or attraction is generally a temporary phenomenon which ceases when its unconscious source has been penetrated. This, however, does not relieve the phenomenon of its special moral dangers. Granting that no analyst desires a permanent transference relationship, since it would indicate a failure of the treatment, there are obvious dangers peculiar to the transitory state.

In the first place, there is the fact that overt action and speech seem to indicate a higher degree of responsibility than does the simple excitement of emotion. Secondly, injurious words and actions can have permanent effects, both for the patient and for those towards whom they are directed.

As far as the responsibility goes, the patient and analyst would have to exercise greater caution to control the speech and deeds occasioned by abreaction, for it is undeniable that express activity is at all times more fully under the control of the will than is affective response. All else being equal, a man is morally less responsible for his feelings than for the actions and words they command, for the reduction of feeling to action normally requires an intervening voluntary decision. A psychoanalytic patient who frequently expressed the impulses aroused in him by analysis would be presumably that much closer to committing himself deliberately to the real situation represented by his feelings. Nevertheless, in making a concrete judgment it should not be forgotten that external behavior does not always depend on deliberation, for example,

walking or talking in sleep, actions performed in states of hypnosis and intoxication, etc.

In regard to the possibly injurious effects of the words and deeds of a patient, both the patient and the analyst would necessarily proceed more circumspectly. In the analytic session itself the danger seems minimal, as long as the analyst is himself a moral man. He himself will not be surprised, offended or taken in by the reactions he is already looking for and expecting. The cases, however, of possible harmful effects towards the patient's family and associates present more problems, particularly if the analyst, as seems to be the custom, avoids meeting them. His advice, which would be the most pertinent advice on the matters in question, is generally unavailable to the family. This is unfortunate for, even if they are aware of the possibilities of unusual reactions from the patient, they cannot be expected on their own instance to have the patience and understanding that professional knowledge could provide. Their ties with the patient may cushion the effects of emotional outbursts to some extent, but probably not always or entirely. This would seem to be one of the areas in which the training of the conscious powers of the patient is particularly important, to give him the necessary insight and conscious command to overcome or turn aside the impulses which might otherwise damage the justice and charity of his social relationships.

It does not seem necessary, therefore, to prohibit psychoanalysis because of the danger in some cases of damaging actions, but it is evident that all precautions should be employed to minimize the risk. Fortunately, in this regard, practically all analysts, recognizing their responsibilities to the patient in the social order, are agreed.[59]

[59] Father Snoek has come to the same conclusions on this point. "When a patient is on the point of committing himself to an unconsciously abreactional action evolving in a social setting, the analyst will have to follow his development very closely and restrain him from subsequent reprehensible acts that are difficult to undo, even at the cost of regression in his treatment. It is only fair that the doctor, who by his therapeutic relationship is more or less the cause of what is taking place, should do everything in his power to avert the evil consequences

F. Conclusion

The several conclusions drawn on the preceding pages do not cover all the kinds of problems which might confront a patient, or an analyst, in the course of psychoanalytic treatment. There are other problems which perhaps cannot be clearly defined in the moral order until their psychological structure is more accurately determined, and this depends in turn on the accumulation of more data. There is steady progress, however, in many directions to reduce the number of perplexing cases and without doubt this progress will be accelerated as theologians become more thoroughly acquainted with the workings of psychoanalysis. At the same time a growing number of psychoanalysts are investigating and applying the theological implications of their particular doctrines. Happily there are contemporary trends in psychoanalysis which express the doctrines of depth psychology in categories and terms more in line with those familiar to traditional psychologists and moralists; meanwhile the traditionalists who penetrate more deeply into their inheritance find that it is not so alien to depth psychology as manuals might seem to make it, and as it certainly seemed to be in the days of Freud. From both sides, a meeting of minds is being effected which can only have happy consequences: a moral guidance for psychoanalytic treatment which will secure the greatest freedom in therapeutic method consonant with sound morality.

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of his intervention." *Op. cit.*, p. 189. Father Snoek in the same connection gives an analysis of the factors involved in such actions which render them difficult to judge, which should be helpful to confessors who have to judge *post factum*, but are not, I believe, of great assistance in making confident judgments prior to the acts.

THE SUBJECT OF PREDICAMENTAL ACTION

IN a recent issue of *The Thomist*[1] Fr. William D. Kane reviews a question which has exercised commentators of St. Thomas for many centuries: whether predicamental action is in the agent, or in the patient, or in both agent and patient. Fr. Kane believes that "the doctrine of John of St. Thomas on the subject expresses the reality, is in full conformity with the teaching of St. Thomas and reconciles the opinions of opposing authors." And in his article he leads us step by step through the doctrine of John of St. Thomas with masterly clarity. To put the conclusions in the article briefly: action in a created agent is inchoatively in the agent, insofar as the agent is moved from potency to actuality by the action; it is consummatively in the patient, insofar as the patient too is moved by the action from potency to actuality. These two formalities of action, in the agent and in the patient, are, Fr. Kane adds, really, or *res a re*, distinct; and each formality is an integral part of action as a whole, differing from the whole modally, or *res a parte rei*.

I should first of all like to thank Fr. Kane for this article, and for his careful and powerful exposition of a teaching not fully represented in even the best of the Thomistic manuals. But I would secondly like to put before him certain doubts that I entertain about his treatment, and suggest another possible way of looking at the problem.

In the first place, I am doubtful whether full justice has been done in his article, or in the corresponding sections of John of St. Thomas's *Cursus Philosophicus*, to the classical teaching of both Aristotle and St. Thomas in the *Physics*. Fr. Kane towards the end of his article (p. 388) reproves Fr. Gredt for saying that "when St. Thomas places action in the patient,

[1] *The Thomist*, XXII (1959), 366-388.

he is exercising the role of a commentator," and thus explaining away the *Physics* texts as not really representative of St. Thomas's own mind. This remark of Fr. Gredt, I agree, seems an inadequate explanation of some of the very formal remarks St. Thomas makes in the course of his fourth and fifth lectures on the third book of the *Physics*. Moreover, it neglects the fact that nearly half of the fifth lecture is not devoted to a commentary, but to a digression in which St. Thomas defends Aristotle's thesis against objections that Aristotle himself did not raise. But is John of St. Thomas's way of dealing with these texts any more acceptable? He writes that "Aristotle was not concerned to explain how action was in the agent but how it was in the patient. . . . For this alone was a difficulty, and served his purpose, treating as he was of *motus* primarily, and of action as a condition of *motus* identical with it and thus in the patient alone." [2] And I suppose what goes for Aristotle must go for St. Thomas as well, unless we revert to Fr. Gredt's thesis that St. Thomas was deliberately restricting himself to the role of a commentator. However, I think it can be shown that whether action (or any part of it) is in the agent *is* a difficulty which comes up in Aristotle's treatment of *motus*, and in fact an answer had to be offered. And the answer consisted in a simple denial that action was in the agent at all. If I am right about this, it will throw doubt on John of St. Thomas's interpretation of the *Physics* passages, and hence on his whole answer to the problem of predicamental action.

It seems best then to consider in the first section of this article the *Physics* texts, and to ask whether "a clear, understandable answer to the problem of the subject of predicamental action" (p. 366) is not already contained in them. In a second section we will consider whether the other texts of St. Thomas scattered throughout his writings contradict, or merely further expand, the doctrine of the *Physics*. We shall then be in a position to examine the various opinions of the commentators and of Fr. Kane himself in two further sections, before

[2] *Cursus Philosophicus Thomisticus* (Turin: Marietti, 1933), II, 314a48-314b9.

finally summarising our conclusions with special reference to the other problem that exercises Fr. Kane, i. e., the nature of efficient causality.

A. The Discussion of Predicamental Action in the *Physics*

1. Is action as actuation of the agent taken into account?

Both Fr. Kane and John of St. Thomas believe that action involves mutation of the agent as well as mutation of the patient, and that this side of the matter is not treated in the *Physics*. The mutation of the agent referred to is the " transition from idleness to operation; for the agent does not act unless it is in the second act of acting." [3] In other words, we must consider action, not only as the actuation of the passive potency in the patient, but also as the actuation of the active potency in the agent. For it is quite clear, as St. Thomas says, that " the action of a thing completes its potency in some way, for it is compared to the potency as second act to first act "; [4] or again, more tersely, " action is the actualisation of a power." [5]

But is it true that this side of action is not treated in the *Physics*? It seems rather to be precisely the datum from which Aristotle starts. The subject of action is in fact introduced with the words, " The mover too is moved," and a little later Aristotle writes, " A thing is capable of causing motion because it *can* do it; it is a mover because it actually does it." [6] St. Thomas's commentary makes it clear that he regards Aristotle as here facing the question of the transition from idleness to operation in the agent. " First," he says, " Aristotle proves that every mover is moved. . . . Firstly, because it is first moving in potency and after that is actually moving. . . . Secondly, because the ceasing to move is called a *quies*." [7]

Granted that the *Physics* discussion of action starts from

[3] Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 370.
[4] *Contra Gentiles*, II, c. 9.
[5] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 54, a. 1.
[6] *Physics* 202a3, 16-17.
[7] *III Physics*, lect. 4. (Pirotta 587-8).

the side of the agent, what question does Aristotle ask? The question is whether the actuation of the agent differs from that actuation of the patient known as *motus*, i. e., whether there is a separate actuation of the agent over and above the actuation of the patient. First of all, two side issues are removed.[8] For it must be admitted that since bodies move each other by touching each other, and contact must generally be mutual contact, it *happens* (*accidit*) that a bodily agent is generally moved. In this sense there can, by accident, be a separate *motus* in the agent over and above the *motus* in the patient. But the action of the agent cannot *per se* be a *motus* in the agent, for action is based on act in the agent, whereas *motus* would be based on potency. These two points having been made, we can turn to consider that actuation of the agent which certainly does occur in the transition from idleness to operation, and ask whether, although this actuation cannot be, strictly speaking, *motus* in the agent, it is, nevertheless, something over and above *motus* in the patient. I quote St. Thomas's commentary in full:

> Whatever can be said to be in potency and act possesses some act special to itself. But just as that which is moved is said to be potentially moveable when it can be moved, and actually the moved thing when it is actually being moved; so also the mover is said to have the power to move potentially when it can move, to be moving during the acting itself, i. e. when it actually acts. It is necessary therefore that both mover and moveable should be actuated in some way.[9]

Here, it would seem, we have the two formalities of action that Fr. Kane and John of St. Thomas distinguish. What then is the answer to the question: are these formalities different?

> It is necessarily one act that actuates both mover and moveable. For that which is from the mover as from the acting cause is the same as that which is in the patient receiving. . . . *Motus* is the actuation of the mover, in so far as it proceeds *from* the mover *into*

[8] *Ibid.* (589-594).

[9] *Ibid.* (597). Reading *movens in ipso agere* for *motus in ipso agere*, for compare the text being commented.

the moveable; it is also the actuation of the moveable, in so far as it is *in* the moveable *from* the mover.[10]

We should, of course, note that John of St. Thomas accepts these conclusions, but interprets them as being true only of action taken " consummatively," i. e., precisely insofar as action is identical with motion in the patient. What I am pointing out, however, is that the *principles* from which St. Thomas draws his conclusions definitely take action as the actuation of the mover to second act, i. e., action taken " inchoatively " in John of St. Thomas's terminology. This is why I feel that John of St. Thomas's interpretation of the *Physics* texts is inadequate, for it seems to involve attributing an equivocation on the word *actus* to Aristotle and to St. Thomas. In the premisses of the argument *actus* is the actuation of the agent; in the conclusion it is the terminus of the action, i. e., what is done.

2. Is there a special sense of acting inchoatively, which the *Physics* texts do not take into account?

I presume that the answer of John of St. Thomas to the objection set out in the previous paragraph would run as follows. Even in his principles St. Thomas is taking action in the consummative sense, although he introduces it by talking of the transition from idleness to operation. For there is a sense in which it must be agreed that an agent is actually acting only when its term, i. e., the action in the patient, is being produced. It is in this sense, John of St. Thomas would say, that St. Thomas is talking of the transition from idleness to operation. But then, what are the reasons for distinguishing another meaning of transition from idleness to operation, another meaning of second act, i. e., acting inchoatively, in John of St. Thomas's sense? It seems to involve making some distinction between an agent being in second act as an agent, and being in second act as an effective cause. Perhaps the following quotation from John of St. Thomas gives a clue.

For just as the agent is intrinsically in potency and in first act to

[10] *Ibid.* (598-9).

operating, so also it is necessary that it be reduced intrinsically to second act, and hence changed into an actuated state (*mutetur in actum*), at the moment it is actually operating. Therefore this actuality of action must be in the agent.[11]

In other words, besides the consummative action in the patient there must be some inchoative action in the agent in order to actuate intrinsically the agent's intrinsic potency. A little later we shall discuss whether this argument does not rest upon an equivocal use of the word *intrinsic*. But in the present section it is more relevant to point out that this is precisely the objection to Aristotle's thesis that Aristotle himself next raises.

Actually, Aristotle brings up a series of objections in the form of a dilemma, but these, says St. Thomas, can be reduced to five main ones.[12] And the first of the five is that from Aristotle's doctrine it would follow that the proper act of one thing, the agent, would not be in that of which it was the act, i. e., would not be intrinsic to the thing to which the corresponding potency was intrinsic. If John of St. Thomas were right, we would at least expect some sort of distinction to be made in answer to this question. But all we get is a simple and terse rejection of the argument.

There is no inconvenience attached to the act of one thing being in another. For teaching is the act of the teacher, and yet *from* him and continuously and without break tending into another. Hence it is the same act which belongs to the agent as that from which, and yet is in the patient as received in it. Inconvenience would however arise if the act of one thing was in another in the same way in which it was the act of the first thing.[13]

In other words, there is no inconvenience attached to having the first act, namely, the potency, in one thing, and the second act, namely, the action, in another. It does not follow that because the potency is intrinsic the action reducing it to second act is also intrinsic. I would like to draw attention to

[11] *Curs. Phil.*, II, 314a 11-17.
[12] III *Physic., lect. 5.*
[13] *Ibid.*

the phrase " continuously and without break " used above by St. Thomas, which corresponds to a phrase of Aristotle's, " not cut adrift from." This seems to say explicitly, if we put it in John of St. Thomas' terminology, that although the consummative action is in the patient it is not thereby separated from the agent, and, therefore, can perfect the intrinsic potency of the agent. There is no need for two separate acts, namely, the inchoative action in the agent and the consummative action in the patient.

The four further objections that Aristotle brings up against his thesis we will not consider here, except to point out that they merely underline the position taken above, and come eventually to the statement that the action of the agent and the *motus* in the patient differ only *secundum rationem* and not *secundum rem*.[14]

It seems clear then that the texts of Aristotle and St. Thomas in the *Physics* do adopt squarely the notion of action as the second act of the agent, as the actuality of the power of the agent. But they, nevertheless, maintain that this actuality is not in the agent, but from it. They maintain that the actuality belongs to the agent precisely in this way, that it is an actuality that comes from it.

B. Further Discussion of Predicamental Action in St. Thomas

1. The analogy of *actus*.

The great difficulty about the position taken up in the *Physics* is the doubtful intelligibility of an actuality of a power not in that power but from it; and the further texts in St. Thomas on this subject may all be interpreted as attempts to remove this doubt about intelligibility. But before we actually examine a few of these texts, it might be as well to make one small remark about the Latin word *agere*. It is possible to translate this word into English either by the verb " to act " or the verb " to do." The latter has two advantages. It is both

[14] *Ibid.*

transitive and intransitive as *agere* is, and it is the auxiliary verb we use in connection with all other verbs.[15] "To act," however, is generally intransitive and so cannot help suggesting to the mind of the English-speaking reader, immanence. "To do" therefore seems a better translation, at least in the context of transient action. And one wonders whether, if the thesis that action while being an actuation of the agent is nevertheless in the patient, had been phrased, "Deeds are actuations of their doers but are in the thing done or made," much of the apparent unintelligibility of the thesis would not have disappeared.

Be that as it may, the fundamental metaphysical reason for the difficulty is that it is not often remembered in this context that "actuality" is an analogical and not a univocal term. There is a text in St. Thomas's *Commentary on the Metaphysics* that puts this point precisely. St. Thomas, following Aristotle *in loco*, says that *actus* is said in diverse ways, according to diverse proportions, i. e., diverse analogies.

> Aristotle shows that *actus* is said in different ways, and gives two examples. His first example is that *actus* can either mean *esse* or *operatio*. And he introduces one to this difference by saying first that not everything is said to be in an act in the same sense, but in different senses. And we may consider this by considering different proportions. For we can take the proportion in this way: that as P is in Q, so X is in Y: for example as sight is in the eye, so the power of hearing is in the ear. And by taking proportion in this way we compare form to matter, for form is said to be *in* matter. But another way of taking proportion is this: that as P is related to Q, so X is related to Y: for example, as sight is related to actual seeing, so the power of hearing is related to actual hearing. And taking proportion in this way we compare motion to the moving or any operation whatsoever to its operative power.[16]

The difference being drawn, as the examples show, is precisely the difference between the way in which a form or an active potency actuates its subject (by being *in* it), and the way in

[15] Cf. C. Ernst, O. P., "Transcendence and Spontaneity in the Metaphysics of Morals," *Dominican Studies*, VII (1954), 61.

[16] IX *Metaphysics*, lect. 5 (Cathala 1828-9). Reading "*vel esse vel operatio*."

which second act actuates its active potency (not by being *in* it but by bearing some other relation to it). *Actus* is an analogical term, and not every *actus* is in its potency.

2. The analogy of potency.

It is possible to look at this analogy of *actus* from the reverse side, as an analogy of potency. Potency is divided into active and passive potency, and the senses of potency here are manifestly different. For St. Thomas says that "passive potency is opposed to act, for everything suffers in so far as it is potential," whilst "active potency is not opposed to act but is rather based upon it, for everything acts in so far as it is in act." [17] Hence the way in which a passive potency is actuated will be according to the way act can belong to potency, whereas the way in which an active potency is actuated will be according to the way act can belong to act; and these ways will be manifestly different.

It is, I think, non-advertence to this difference which is at the root of the apparent unintelligibility of Aristotle's thesis in the *Physics*. It is often argued that the actuation of the active potency comes from a superior agent and eventually from God, so that the active potency can be regarded in relation to such a superior agent as being in passive potency to its actuation. But it is not necessary to conceive the situation in this way at all. The active potency is not passive to superior agents. It is related to them as a secondary active source to primary sources in the activity of which it participates. And it participates in that activity as activity and not as passion. When a superior agent moves an inferior agent to act, the movement does not occur *in* the secondary agent (in the sense of *in* employed in the *Metaphysics* quotation above), but in some other relation to the secondary agent. What that exact relation is we have learned from the *Physics*: it is the relation of being *from* the agent. When a superior agent moves an inferior agent to act, the movement occurs *in* the patient. Indeed we may

[17] *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 25, a. 1, ad 1.

define the active potency of a transient agent in the material world as the ability to have an act received in a patient.

3. The analogy of *esse*.

Of course, language in this context is hardly adequate. The very distinction between *esse* and *operatio* must be understood cautiously; otherwise there will be a danger of implying that *operatio* is a sort of *non-esse*. This is not what is meant. In many cases, St. Thomas notes, we use the same words to describe a genus or quasi-genus and to describe one of its species. And though in most such cases the generic word describes the least noble of the species contained in the genus (as *scientia* describes a genus comprising *sapientia* and *scientia*, and *proprium* a genus comprising *essentia* and *proprium*), nevertheless in some cases the generic word describes the most noble of the species in the genus (as *coniugium* describes a genus comprising marital *coniugium* and other less noble forms of union).[18] The use of the word *esse* to signify something distinct from *operatio* falls into this latter category, for *operatio* is itself in another sense a form of *esse*. There are, so to speak, two analogous forms of *esse*: *esse* in a narrower sense, which is signified as *in* what is, and *operatio*, which is signified as from what operates. *Operatio* we might say is *esse ab*. Or, to quote the phrase of a modern writer exploiting the verb "to do" and translating, *unumquodque agit secundum quod actu est, illud scilicet quod agit*,[19] "doing is being in the deed what is done."[20]

4. The analogy of *in*.

And this now gives us the clue to explain those texts in which St. Thomas says simply that *actio est in agente*. For the *esse* of accidents, it is often said, is *inesse*. Since then action is an analogous form of *esse* (namely, *esse ab*), when action is itself an accident (as in created agents), it can be called an analogous form of *inesse* (to perpetrate a barbarism, *inesse ab*).

[18] *IV Sent.*, d. 27, q. 1, a. 1, qcla. 2, 3m.
[19] *Q. D. de Anima*, a. 12.
[20] Ernst, *loc. cit.* in note 15 *supra*.

Of course, this last step in the argument would be intolerable if *in* is to be taken here in the sense in which we earlier opposed it to *ab*. It is a different sense of *in* that is now being used, one which is in a certain sense identical with *ab*, differing from it only as a quasi-generic *ratio* from a species. For it is because action is an accident that it is in the agent, in the sense that all accidents are said to be in; but the special way in which action is in the agent is to be from it.

> Inherence is signified in the definition of certain categories, such as quantity, quality and the like. And these are not attributed to a thing except by reason of an inherent form, which is a principle of *esse*, be it substantial or accidental. But in the definition of certain categories there is not signified inherence, but being from another, as appears chiefly in the case of action. For action as action signifies what is *from* an agent; and the fact that it is in the agent happens (*accidit*) to be true of it in so far as it is an accident. Hence the category of action is attributed to the agent by reason of that which is from it, not by reason of anything which is a principle of the agent: thus we say it is an agent by its action, although action is not the principle of the agent but vice versa. And if we were to postulate *per impossibile* some action which was not an accident, it would not be inherent . . .[21]

In other words, to say that action is in the agent is to say that action is an accident of the agent, and no more. We are saying that the action is the action *of* the agent, simply, and as St. Thomas tells us in the *Physics* and tells us again here, the special way in which action is of the agent is to be from it. And here we may refer back to the argument of John of St. Thomas deducing the intrinsic character of second act from the intrinsic character of first act. It seems now that there has been an equivocation on the word " intrinsic." For undoubtedly the second act is intrinsic in the sense that, as an accident, it has real being dependent upon the subject, and perfects that subject in some way; and this is fundamentally the sense of *in* in the word *inesse*. But that it should be intrinsic in exactly the same sense as the active potency, namely as a form, is to

[21] *I Sent.*, d. 32, q. 1, a. 1.

confuse the way in which action is an accident with the way in which a quality is an accident. Action is not a form.

To say, therefore, that action is in the agent, as St. Thomas undoubtedly does on many occasions, is neither an alternative nor an addition to saying that it is from the agent. Indeed it appears that at least one of the texts much quoted against the thesis that action is in the patient, is in fact unintelligible unless that thesis is true. This text states that " since action is in the agent and passion in the patient they cannot be one and the same accident." [22] What has been said above shows that for this statement to be true, it is not necessary to take the phrase " in the agent " in any other sense than " is an accident of the agent." Moreover, if the objection to which St. Thomas' text is an answer is examined, it will be found that this phrase is modelled on a phrase in the objection; and this phrase states that *motus in agente est actio et in patiente est passio* where *in agente* can only be interpreted as meaning from the agent. Again, a little later in St. Thomas' reply he states that " because their difference (namely, the difference of the two accidents, action and passion) is only by reference to their terms, namely, the agent and the patient, and since *motus* abstracts from these terms, *motus* can be understood without the difference and is therefore one." So that the difference of accidents *in* the agent and patient is here made to rest precisely on the different relations to agent as *from*, and to patient as *in*.

5. The analogy of the predicaments.

This brings us immediately to a further objection of John of St. Thomas against the thesis that action and passion refer, by means of different *rationes*, to one reality in the patient. " Action and passion," he says, " are two different predicaments. Therefore they postulate more than a distinction of reason, for the predicaments order real being, and where there are distinct predicaments there must be distinct realities, at least modally." [23] Now this is exactly the objection to which

[22] *II Sent.*, d. 40, q. 1, a. 4, 1m. Quoted, for example, by John of St. Thomas, *Curs. Phil.*, II, 313a26-31.

[23] *Curs. Phil.*, II, 300b42-301a6.

we earlier referred, which St. Thomas introduces into his commentary on the *Physics*, although Aristotle had not raised it. He puts it in the following way: " If action and passion are one *motus* and do not differ except by a distinction of reason, it would seem that they should not be two predicaments: for the predicaments are genera of things." [24]

He answers the objection by discussing predicaments in general. They are not species of the genus " being " but are rather analogous modes in which the word *esse* can be used about reality. Sometimes *esse* signifies substantial being, as in the predicament of substance; sometimes not substantial being, but at least something inherent, as in quantity, quality and the like; sometimes not even something inherent, but something extrinsic which nevertheless denominates the subject. Two such predicaments are action and passion. They are distinct predicaments, not because they are distinct " species " of being, but because they are predicated by relation to two different things: namely, the agent (from which the action is) and the patient (in which passion is).[25]

6. Summary.

Action is not a form. In this statement we summarize the whole difficulty. It is not a form because it does not actuate a passive potency (by being in it), but an active one (by being from it). Unfortunately, this is difficult to express. For commonly we denominate things from forms, as white things from whiteness, and men from their humanity. As a result a certain character of form attaches to anything we use to denominate another thing.[26] But to be led by this into stating that every such denominating reality is really a form, is to allow oneself to be led astray by modes of speech and thinking. St. Thomas himself writes:

The source of denomination does not always need to be a form according to its real nature. It suffices that it should be signified as

[24] III *Physics.*, lect. 5 (616).
[25] *Ibid.* (617-626).
[26] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 37, a. 2.

a form is signified, grammatically speaking. Thus man is denominated by action and by clothing, which in reality are not forms.[27]

This does not mean that the denomination in these cases is wholly a matter of reason, without any foundation in fact (as happens, for example, in the case of those rational relations predicated because of an opposing real relation: a thing is said to be known because something else knows it). Rather it means that the foundation in fact is not here an inherent form, but an *esse ab*. In fact, you can also have imagined actions, namely, when there is no real *esse ab*. For real action requires real *esse ab* just as real relations require a real inherence of form. Indeed this seems to be the point St. Thomas is making when in a parallel deduction of the predicaments to that in the *Physics*, this time in the *Metaphysics*, he admits that the predicaments action and passion cannot be said to be wholly external denominations. For in one sense he says they are *in* the subject: in the case of action, in the sense that the subject is its principle.[28] In other words, action is in the agent because it is really from it.

Such then is the point of view that I would like to put before Fr. Kane as an explanation of St. Thomas' texts on the subject of predicamental action. If there are texts which will not fit with this explanation I would like him to let me know of them, for it is sometimes true that even one isolated text can ruin an entire interpretation. At the moment, however, the texts that I know seem to be all reconciled by this way of looking at action: the proper act and an accident of the agent indeed, but nevertheless in the patient and differing from passion not *secundum rem* but *secundum rationem*. Admittedly, one way of stating that action is an accident of the agent is to say that action is in the agent; but this is not opposed to the statement that action is from the agent, rather it is the same statement put in another way.

[27] *De Potentia*, q. 7, a. 10, 8m.
[28] V *Metaphys.*, lect. 9 (892).

C. The Scholastic Positions.

It remains to take a quick look at the main scholastic positions on the topic, and see whether they too are reconcilable with the point of view of this article. Cajetan [29] argues that action cannot consist merely of the *motus* in the patient plus the relation whereby the *motus* is *from* an agent; his principal reason is that this would make no sense in God. For in God transient action is to be identified with his essence, but neither the *motus* in the patient nor a relation which in God is rational can be identified with God's essence. There must therefore be something more than these in action.

Ferrariensis [30] opposes this way of thinking. He points out many places where St. Thomas says that if *motus* is subtracted from the notion of action and passion, only the relations *ab* and *in* would remain. For this reason he believes that when transient action is identified with God's essence, it is not because of anything included in the notion of transient action as such, but because the transient action is based on immanent actions which are so identified. Unfortunately, this involves him in explaining all the references to action being in an agent (which are numerous in St. Thomas), as referring to immanent action, a point of view difficult to uphold.

John of St. Thomas,[31] therefore, follows Cajetan, while stressing that there is a sense in which action, simply speaking, is in the patient (as Aristotle has proved in the *Physics*). He thus comes to what Fr. Kane calls the classical formula: "Action in a created agent . . . is inchoatively in the agent and consummatively in the term." [32] At first sight, this formula might be interpreted in the sense of the present article, for created action takes its beginning from the agent (and so is in it, in an attenuated sense), but is, simply speaking, in the patient. But this is apparently not what John of St. Thomas means, for

[29] *Commentaria in Summam Theologicam*, I, q. 25, a. 1.
[30] *Commentaria in Summam contra Gentiles*, II, c. 1; c. 9.
[31] *Curs. Phil.*, II, 309b-315a (*Phil. Nat.*, I, q. 14, a. 4).
[32] *Ibid.*, 312a24-28. Quoted by Fr. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

he insists on the different realities in agent and patient (though not, I think, quite as strongly as Fr. Kane suggests), and moreover seems to wish the action to be in the agent in the same sense as the operative potency is in the agent.

Is not the extra element that Cajetan was seeking the fact that, although created action is received in the patient, nevertheless, it is the proper perfection of the agent? Though even here we must be careful, apparently, and remember that if *actus* has a double sense, so must perfection have. Otherwise we shall be faced with those texts of St. Thomas that state formally that transient action does not perfect the agent.[33] Action perfects the agent not as being a formal perfection in it, but as being realization of an end of the agent in the patient. Now when we transfer this idea to God, we must deny that the perfection of God can lie in something distinct from himself, and so what is present to the creaturely agent as from it, must be present to God in his essence. For there are indeed two elements to be distinguished in creaturely action, although both are on the side of the term. The one element is that the term comes to be as a result of the action; the other is that a perfection of the agent comes to be as a result of the action. When God acts, the first of these conditions is met, and the creature comes to be (although the relation of God to that creature is now a rational relation). But the second condition is not met, for God does not act in order to perfect himself; his action is not an expression of " desire " for perfection, but is a superabundance of " joy " in perfection already possessed. The term, so to speak, of God's action is the perfection He already possesses in His essence. The creature is not made in order that God may realize the perfection of His essence, but merely in order to display it.

Ferrariensis was, therefore, right in thinking that the perfection of the created agent lay altogether in the patient. But he seems to have been so anxious to deny that it lay in the agent, that he denied even the most attenuated sense of " in."

[33] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 18, a. 3, ad 1; I-II, q. 3, a. 2, ad 3; I *Cont. Gent.*, c. 100.

All references therefore to transient action in the agent had to be interpreted as though they were said of immanent actions, a point of view which comes very near to making the same mistake as his opponents, who see in every transient action an immanent part and a transient part. Both are understanding *in* in too full a sense, instead of giving it the sense it has in the phrase, *Accidentium esse est inesse.*

D. Remaining Difficulties from Fr. Kane's Article.

Three further difficulties appear to be proper to Fr. Kane's own view. The first is the *res a re* distinction he draws between action in the agent and action in the patient. For although he believes this to be John of St. Thomas' doctrine, I am not sure that it is. Fr. Kane appeals to an example used by John of St. Thomas comparing the sharing of action by agent and patient to the sharing of moral virtues by will and sensitive appetite.[34] But in the first instance, this is a sharing of a form by two passive potencies, whilst we have to do with the sharing of an action by an active and a passive potency. In the second instance, John of St. Thomas used this example to explain the sense in which action is one, rather than the sense in which it is diverse; and it does not follow that the particular type of diversity present in the example will be the particular type of diversity present in the thing to which the example is applied.

This, however, is a difficulty about John of St. Thomas and how to interpret him. The second difficulty goes a little deeper. When Fr. Kane refers to the way action is in the patient being different from the way passion is in the patient,[35] it often sounds as though he is putting action as action in the patient. Not even John of St. Thomas thought that action as action was *in* anything; it is action as *identical* with passion that is in the patient.

[34] *Op. cit.*, pp. 384-5.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 381. Note that line 7 on this page is a repeat printing of line 11, and owing to this error it is not possible to follow completely Fr. Kane's argument, [The sentence to which Fr. McDermott refers begins on line 6 and should read thus: "There is a growth in actuality, a progress to the final term which is a redhot piece of iron." Editor's Note.]

Finally, it would seem that in order to arrive at this notion of action as such in the patient, Fr. Kane borrows from something John of St. Thomas says in a different connection,[36] namely, when discussing how action can influence a patient in the absence of the agent. John of St. Thomas is thinking of such cases as the action of diffused heat from a remote fire, or conception due to *semen* separated from the generating animal. In such cases there is a sort of instrumental action lingering in separation from the agent, and the example is given of heat passing from local part to local part of a thing being heated, each part acting as a sort of instrument on the next part. Now Fr. Kane seems to identify this gradual spreading of heat with *motus*, and then to distinguish the instrumental activity involved as being action (in the patient), the being heated as passion. But the gradualness of *motus* is not a spatial gradualness of spread, but a gradualness of increase in heat from a *terminus a quo* to a *terminus ad quem*, from potential possession to actual possession. And the fact that there may be instrumentality involved is completely accidental to this. This is not the sense in which St. Thomas says that action is in the patient; it is action as *identical* with passion that is in the patient.

E. Final Summary. The Nature of Causality.

This last idea of Fr. Kane's seems to be the reason why he finds the nature of causality difficult to express. For in bringing the instrumentality of local motion into the center of his picture, he finds it very difficult to transcend the mere notion of dispositive causality.[37] Now dispositive causality can be transcended only by attending to the fact that it is informed by purpose, and it is by discussing this that we shall bring the present article to a close.

Being is not just substance plus inherent accidents; being cannot be wholly described in terms of form; this, in a sense, is the main idea behind this article. There are two ways of

[36] *Ibid.*, 379, 381.

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 379-380.

looking at the realm of being: either in terms of form, or in terms of *finis*; and an *actus* can find a niche in being, so to speak, as form or *finis*. In the first way, *actus* gives rise to *esse* in the narrow sense explained earlier; in the second way, *actus* gives rise to *operatio* and causation. This will be clearer if we remember that *actus* are common by their nature, and the commonness either appears as the predicative commonness of form, or as the ideal and attractive commonness of *finis* (for *finis* is by nature attractive to many, and the ultimate *finis* is necessarily the universal *finis*). Given this foundation we can say with St. Thomas: "It is of the nature of every *actus* to communicate itself as far as possible."[38] That is to say, the very nature of *actus* is such that not only is it apt to be common where it is, but it is apt to "desire" to be common where it is not. The result of this "desire" is the *motus* of a patient to that *actus*, for *motus* is, so to speak, the response of a patient to the attraction of the *actus*. This is reminiscent of Plato, with, however, the Aristotelian reservation that the way in which an *actus* comes to be present as attractive to a patient, is by the instrumentality of an agent. It is in the "intention" of an agent that the *actus* first appears as attractive to a patient. The efficient causality of an agent is indeed nothing more than a making actual of the final causality of the *actus* possessed by the agent. We are too inclined to regard efficient causality as the basic phenomenon in causality. The basic phenomenon is the "attractive" causality of a *finis*, which is realised in the agent as efficient causality, and in the patient as movement towards an effect. The priority of agent over patient depends itself on something even more primordial —the end. The priority of agent over patient is not the priority of a spontaneous impulse from the agent over a passive reaction in the patient. It is movement to an end which is primordial, and this realizes itself first in the agent as action, and hence in the patient as passion. Efficient causality is not the cause of attraction to an end as such, even if it is the cause that such attraction is, as a matter of fact, felt by the patient. On the

[38] *De Pot.*, q. 2, a. 1.

contrary, final causality of an *actus*, as St. Thomas says, is the cause of efficient causality of an agent.[39]

> Hence every agent acts according as it is in act. For to act is nothing more than to communicate that by which an agent is in act as far as possible.[40]

Here we meet the crux of the difficulty. For it seems impossible to go very far into the analysis of this prior final causality which is exerted through the "instrumentality" of the agent, without using such words as "desire" or "intention," words which can properly be used only if the agent in question is immaterial, or at least intellectual. Hence we are led to maintain that causality is not possible for bodies, and cannot be explained, without recourse to agent intelligences: *opus naturae est opus intelligentiae*. The question as to how one body can influence another intrinsically is impossible to answer as long as we stay on the level where beings are relevant to one another only through material contact. Only by moving back to the agent intelligences who can apply one body to another in order to realize purposes and *fines* conceived by those intelligences, can we come to grips with true efficient, as distinct from dispositive, causality. Indeed this process is precisely the one embarked on in the fifth proof of God's existence in the *Summa*.

Are we then to say that whereas the sensible qualities of the material body have a dispositive role to play in causality, it is only the intelligent use of these, by an agent intelligence (namely, God) acting for an end, that is truly efficient causality? This is, in a sense, what we must say, as long as we do not reduce bodies to *mere* instruments in the hands of God. Since God is the Creator, the purposes and uses that He puts things to do not always remain accidental and external to the things themselves (as they would in cases where man was the principal agent). The purpose God uses a thing for is sometimes the very principle of the thing's being. For in a

[39] Cf. V *Metaphys.*, lect. 2 (775) and lect. 3 (782).
[40] *Loc. cit.*, note 38.

sense, instruments of God are what things *are*. God lies behind every act of causality directing it to its end, yet the instrumental *vis* that He is giving to the agent is its form; and the agent is therefore not just an instrument in the human sense, but a true secondary cause.

One way in which St. Thomas puts this is that the *amor* of the superior agent can be shared in *inherently* by the inferior agent. Thus he writes:

> Love, properly speaking, belongs only to those who can know. But the word "love" has a more extended use than the word "knowledge": for love describes an ordering of the lover to another thing, and things can be ordered to other things by exterior causes. Hence those things which are ordered to something by people with knowledge (to whom love properly belongs), can themselves be said to love or desire, in so far as they in themselves are ordered to the loved thing. Knowledge however describes the existence of a known thing in a knower according to the knower's mode of existence, namely, spiritually and immaterially. Such a disposition however cannot belong to anything except by its own nature: and so the word "knowledge" can only be used of things having such a nature. Things therefore without sense-awareness cannot be said to know naturally, but they can be said to love or desire naturally.[41]

Thus what we can have in these inferior agents is non-immanent action realising a love immanent in some superior agent. And yet the inferior agent can also be said to participate this love insofar as it has in itself a principle of the action, namely, its own form (or better, the active potency due to the form). Form, of its nature, is participated love.

> The generating cause is responsible not only for heaviness but for the motion following upon heaviness. The heaviness itself, which is the principle of motion to the place natural to heavy things, can be called in a sense the thing's natural love.[42]

And so we are back at the fundamental point again: *actus* is not just form in the sense of a principle of *esse* in the narrow sense, but is also the principle of *operatio*. For the form itself

[41] *III Sent.*, d. 27, q. 1, a. 4, 13m.
[42] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 27, a. 4.

has inclination, by its nature as *actus*, to communicate itself to other things for such is God's intention.

> The natural form is not said to be a principle of action insofar as it is a form immanent in that to which it give *esse*, but insofar as it has an inclination to an effect.[43]

Efficient causality is therefore mysterious (in a negative sense of that word) only when the inclination consequent upon form is seen as an unaccountable addition to the form's essential nature, which is interpreted as principle of *esse*. The essential nature of form is to be an *actus*, and as such the form both gives *esse* and inclines to action. Having a form is not only the way things share in being, but the way they share in the purposes of God. Form then is the inclination which gives purpose to all the dispositive action of the sensible qualities of an inferior agent, and form is perfected by action in so far as the action realises the end to which the form is inclined of its nature. In a certain sense, the action is the execution of the form, and is to be found where the execution occurs, namely, in the patient.

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[43] *Ibid.*, I, q. 14, a. 8.

REFLEXION ON THE QUESTION OF GOD'S EXISTENCE IN CONTEMPORARY THOMISTIC METAPHYSICS

PART TWO

(Continued from previous number)

Introduction

THE survey of the status of the question of God's existence in Thomistic metaphysics imposes the need for the formal reflective element that is now to be undertaken. The positions indicated are advanced as metaphysics' discovery, as its direct knowledge of the truth concerning God's existence. Metaphysics as wisdom has the right of reflexion upon its own inventive process; and given the divergency of positions advanced, the Thomistic metaphysician must assume the obligation of exercising this reflective function concerning the question of God's existence.

It is well to restate the conditions of the reflexion in this instance, namely, that the matter at hand is the question of God's existence in its scientific pertinence to Thomistic metaphysics' process of discovery. The reflexion itself entails a judgment concerning metaphysics' proportion to the discovery of this truth. The varied presentations of authors regarding God's existence result, like their origins, from positions affirmed, or at least assumed, relative to the nature of metaphysics itself. A true judgment, perfective of the reflexion upon the point at hand, must similarly proceed as from its principles, from the clear position of St. Thomas regarding metaphysics' nature and proportion to the truth concerning God.

As has been indicated, St. Thomas' position is clearly presented in his commentary on the *De Trinitate* of Boetius. The principles regulative of the present reflexion are to be found in the fourth article of the fifth question. At the outset, it is necessary, with this text at hand, to analyze its argument.

The point raised in the article is this: whether divine science is concerned with those things which are without matter and movement?[1] In the development of the response to this question, there are two main steps. First of all, the possibility of some sort of scientific consideration of divine realities is established; then the actual character of the philosophic consideration of these is determined.

As to the possibility, speculative science in general, to explain its subject, must concern itself with the principles of that subject. Among principles, some are principles only, and not complete natures in themselves; others are both principles and complete natures. The first type are not apt matter for any separate consideration but are attained solely in the science of the subject whose principles they are. The other sort are attainable not only in this way, but also as complete natures in themselves they are apt to be the subject of a distinct science. In the science concerning being in common, metaphysics, this twofold class of principles is to be discerned. Furthermore, the principles common to all beings by way of causality are complete natures in themselves. In fact, as beings which are most actual, immobile, most complete, they are divine. For if the divine exists anywhere it ought to exist in this manner.[2] Thus in establishing that among the principles attained by metaphysics, there are divine realities, complete natures in themselves, St. Thomas leaves open the possibility of a science which is divine insofar as it considers such realities.

As to the character of the philosophic consideration of the divine, however, the power of natural reason is restricted. The

[1] The question proposed by this article: Utrum divina scientia sit de his quae sunt sine materia et motu? Ed. Wyser, 43.

[2] Cf. *ibid.*, 46-48.

only philosophic consideration that is divine science is metaphysics insofar as and exclusively as it attains to the divine as principles of its subject. Any separate consideration of the divine as subject must presuppose a divine manifestation of the divine nature.

The final precision resulting from the argument of the article, thus, is that philosophic theology, otherwise called metaphysics, is divine science solely inasmuch as it considers divine things not as its subject, but as principles of its subject. This is the theology pursued by the philosophers. The theology which is such because it considers divine things as its subject, is that which is presented in Sacred Scripture.[3] In terms of the original question of the article, St. Thomas indicates that divine science in either sense is concerned with things that are separated from matter and movement. But philosophic theology, metaphysics, considers things which can exist separated from matter and movement, as subject; things which cannot exist except separated from matter and movement, only as principles of its subject. Sacred theology, on the other hand, considers divine things, separated in the latter way, as its proper subject.[4]

Setting forth the meaning of this text as its principle, the present reflexion will seek to formulate the authentic Thomistic

[3] Cf. *ibid.* Sic ergo theologia sive scientia divina est duplex: una in qua consideratur res divinae non tanquam subiectum scientiae, sed tanquam principia subiecti, et talis est theologia, quam philosophi prosequuntur, quae alio nomine metaphysica dicitur: alia vero, quae ipsas res divinas considerat propter seipsas ut subiectum scientiae, et haec est theologia, quae in sacra Scriptura traditur. 48.

[4] Cf. *ibid.* Utraque autem est de his, quae sunt separata a materia et motu secundum esse, sed diversimode, secundum quod dupliciter potest esse aliquid a materia et motu separatum secundum esse: uno modo sic quod de ratione ipsius rei, quae separata dicitur, sit quod nullo modo in materia et motu esse possit, sicut Deus et angeli dicuntur a materia et motu separati; alio modo sic, quod non sit de ratione eius, quod sit in materia et motu, sed possit esse sine materia et motu, quamvis quandoque inveniatur in materia et motu, et sic ens et substantia et potentia et actus sunt separata a materia et motu, quia secundum esse a materia et motu non dependent. . . . Theologia ergo philosophica determinat de separatis secundo modo sicut de subiectis, de separatis autem primo modo sicut de principiis subiecti. Theologia vero sacrae Scripturae tractat de separatis primo modo sicut de subiectis, quamvis in ea tractentur aliqua, quae sunt in materia et motu, secundum quod requirit rerum divinarum manifestatio. 48-49.

judgment concerning metaphysics' attainment of the truth of God's existence in this science. The subsequent development, then, shall be twofold:

Section One: Principles of the Reflective Judgment.

Section Two: Metaphysics' Judgment regarding the Attainment of God's Existence.

As to the function of the first section, its importance is indicated by the experience that any author's total view of the question of God in metaphysics governs his position regarding the particular question of God's existence. The teaching of St. Thomas in the *De Trinitate* expresses his view on the larger issue; it is this source that must provide principles regulative of any valid judgment on the existence of God in a Thomistic metaphysics. The text actually has a twofold force. While in the context emphasis is placed upon the limited sense in which metaphysics is " divine science," there is nonetheless an affirmation of the science's extension to the divine. Consequently two norms are clearly formulated: a principle of extension, i. e., the consideration of God does pertain to that science whose subject is being in common; a principle of limitation, i. e., this science considers God not as subject, but as principle of its subject. The history that has been reviewed stresses sufficiently the bearing of such norms; it is imperative then to examine these principles in the meaning they have for St. Thomas himself. Such an examination will itself immediately lead to certain confrontations with positions advanced by some as Thomistic. Thus this section is divided into a study first of the principle of extension and then of the principle of limitation.

PART TWO

Section One

Principles of the Reflective Judgment

THE PRINCIPLE OF EXTENSION

I. Explanation of the Principle

A. Its Meaning

In St. Thomas' affirmation that philosophic theology attains to the consideration of God as principle of its subject, there is a positive side to be stressed in order to set forth his reason for the extension of metaphysics. As the universal science, having being as such as its subject, metaphysics must attain the principles common to all things both by way of predication and by way of causality. After a synthesis of metaphysics' attainment of the latter kind of principles, these are shown to merit the denomination "divine." Thus for metaphysics as science to yield perfect knowledge of its subject, it must attain God.

The elements leading to this affirmation in the light of the significance given them in his own writings, indicate that St. Thomas is here stating that metaphysics' consideration of God is its attainment of its end as science. For, universally, the knowledge of the causes of the subject is the end reached by the inquisitive process of any science.[5] The knowledge of the whole universe and its causes is described as man's ultimate perfection as the philosophers understood this.[6] Particularly with regard to God, the whole scientific endeavor of man reaches its ultimate term in metaphysics and especially in the knowledge of the supreme causes.[7] Indeed, the whole of philo-

[5] Cf. *In Met.*, Prooem.

[6] Cf. *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 2; also q. 20, a. 3.

[7] . . . ultimus terminus resolutionis in hac via est, cum pervenitur ad causas supremas maxime simplices quae sunt substantiae separatae. *In De Trin.*, q. 6, a. 1, ad tertiam quaestionem. 60.

sophy is ordered to the knowledge of God as to its end; thus metaphysics is placed last in the order of learning.[8] For metaphysics is itself totally ordered to this knowledge of God as to its end, a knowledge which is the goal of all human knowledge and operation.[9]

The statement that metaphysics' attains God as principle, then, is the affirmation that the science achieves its end. To examine the reason for this attainment, that in fact metaphysics necessarily has such a termination, is to appreciate the force of the principle of extension. As the evaluation of a particular case of finalization, such an examination can properly proceed from the truth that the order of ends corresponds to the order of agents.[10] Thus the evaluation can be reduced to this: taking the principle of extension as a statement of metaphysics' *de facto* term (*finis effectus*), a direct correlation is to be discerned between this term and the reason for such a termination, i. e., the nature and power of the human intellect. In this way the end which is attained by metaphysics will be seen as an end that must be attained. For the human intellect is the agent through which the knowledge of God that terminates metaphysics is elicited. To examine the intellect is consequently to render account for the extension of metaphysics, indeed of its very existence.[11]

B. Force of the Principle of Extension

1. The natural orientation of the intellect to all being

Since it is man's intellect that carries out the process of metaphysics, that elicits the act of knowledge by which God is considered, it is properly designated as the agent to which

[8] Cf. I *Cont. Gent.*, c. 4.

[9] Ipsaque prima philosophia tota ordinatur ad Dei cognitionem sicut ad ultimum finem: unde et scientia divina nominatur. Est ergo cognitio divina ultimus finis omnis humanae cognitionis et operatinis. III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 25.

[10] Secundum ordinem agentium sive moventium est ordo finium. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 109, a. 6; cf. *In I Eth.*, l. 9, n. 108 (ed. Cathala).

[11] Cum finis respondet principio, non potest fieri ut principio cognito, quis sit rerum finis ignoretur. *Ibid.*, I, q. 103, a. 2,

this end of metaphysics corresponds.[12] St. Thomas frequently asserts the active power of the intellect in the acquisition of science in general.[13] It is in this active power of the intellect as the agent in metaphysics' process, that the reason is to be found for the extension of metaphysics to its term in the consideration of God.

The intellect of man is the proximate principle of that operation of distinctive excellence proper to the human soul. As the substantial form of the human composite, the soul is the principle of actuality, of determination, according to which the composite receives existence. By the same token, since each thing acts according as it is actual and thus according to its form, the soul is the ultimate principle through which (*quo*) all activity is exercised. Corresponding to the perfection of forms in the entitative order is their power in the operative order, operation being the act of an actually existent thing.[14] As the most perfect of all forms which are in matter, the human soul has a power of operation surpassing anything that a corporeal nature can do; a power that overcomes even the need that the operation be exercised with a corporeal organ.[15] This power and the operation expressive of it are proper to the human soul's excellence, to its immateriality, to its transcendence over matter, to its spirituality. The proportionate operation is not only knowledge, but that kind of knowledge which completely transcends the restrictions of matter, intellective

[12] Cf. *Q. D. de Anima*, a. 8.

[13] Manifestum est autem quod intellectus per hoc quod cognoscit principium, reducit seipsum de potentia in actum quantum ad cognitionem conclusionum, et hoc modo movet seipsum. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 9, a. 3; cf. I *Cont. Gent.*, c. 57. In the case of the discursive process proper to man, the intellect is designated as *reason* (*ratio*) insofar as it is the principle of a cognitive process from one truth understood to another acquired. "Intellect" and "reason" thus refer to the same potency as it is designated in the one case according to the simple, immediate act of understanding; in the other, according to a composed act of knowing one truth through another, that is, mediately. Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 8.

[14] Cf. *Q. D. de Anima*, a. 9. Et ideo quanto aliqua forma est maioris perfectionis in dando esse, tanto etiam est maioris virtutis in operando. Unde formae perfectiores habent plures operationes et magis diversas quam formae minus perfectae.

[15] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 77, a. 1; q. 78, a. 1; *De Ver.*, q. 15, a. 2.

knowledge. The intellect itself is the proximate principle, the faculty into which the excellence of the soul is channelled.[16]

Since operations concern some object, intellection has an object proper to it, proportioned to it. Such an object is, to be redundant, " the intelligible." Translating this denomination, " the intelligible," into terms of its proportion to the intellect's operation, such an object is the immaterial. For " something becomes intelligible in act insofar as it is somehow removed from matter." [17] Thus the intelligible, the object of the human intellect's operation, is the immaterial. Stating this positively, St. Thomas, distinguishing the faculties of the soul, declares that the higher the potency, the more universal the object it regards. As the highest faculty, then, the intellect is distinguished from other powers by the most universal object of all, namely, universal being.[18] Briefly he states the force of this: " The proper object of intellect is *intelligible being,* which includes all possible differences and species of being, since whatever can be, can be known." [19] To be, to be intelligible, these are convertible. Because it is *intellect,* the human intellect extends to whatever is. " Now, from the very fact that a substance is intellectual, all being lies within the scope of its understanding." [20] Because it is *intellect,* the human intellect, extending to whatever is, in a certain sense is infinite.[21]

Since the object of the intellect is being, it is the first thing apprehended by the intellect.[22] Because to be is to be intelli-

[16] Cf. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 77, a. 1. The necessity for distinguishing the soul and its faculties as the immediate principles of operation, arises from this, that the soul is not pure act; its operations are distinct from it as accidents; so then are the immediate principles, the potencies or faculties for such operations.

[17] Per hoc autem aliquid fit intelligibile in actu, quod aliqualiter abstrahitur a materia. *In I Phys.,* lect. 1, n. 1; cf. *In De Trin.,* q. 5, a. 1, 26.

[18] Cf. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 78, a. 1; q. 79, a. 2. Intellectus habet operationem circa ens in universali.

[19] Est enim proprium obiectum intellectus ens intelligibile quod quidem comprehendit omnes differentias et species entis possibiles. Quidquid enim esse potest, intelligi potest. II *Cont. Gent.,* c. 98.

[20] Ex hoc autem quod substantia aliqua sit intellectualis, comprehensiva est totius entis. *Ibid.*

[21] Cf. *De Ver.,* q. 15, a. 2.

[22] Primum autem in conceptione intellectus cadit ens, quia secundum hoc un-

gible, and whatever is apprehended by the intellect is, obviously, intelligible, being is involved in whatever the intellect apprehends.[23] Thus the power of intellect is coextensive in scope with all reality; the formality of the human intellect as intellect makes it comprehensive of all being. Since upon every form or nature there follows a corresponding inclination,[24] upon the nature of the intellect as open to the attainment of all reality, there follows a natural appetite to know. This fact is succinctly expressed in the opening words of Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* cited by St. Thomas: "In all men there is naturally a desire to know (*sciendum*)." [25]

In these words is implied the extension of the human intellect first of all to the science of metaphysics, and ultimately to the attainment of God. From this natural desire, consonant with the intellect's nature and specifically with its human features, there results the whole scientific development of man, whose crown is metaphysics with its termination in the knowledge of the first cause of all being.

2. The science of metaphysics with its termination, the expressions of the intellect's orientation

Speaking of the natural appetite that follows upon every form, and is identical with the form considered as principle of perfection,[26] St. Thomas says that this appetite is directed towards the perfection consonant with the form. Such perfection is the object of a desire or tendency, if it is not yet possessed by reason of the very form itself, or the object of rest, if the form actually contains all such perfection.[27] With respect to the intellective power, the perfection conformed to

umquodque cognoscibile est inquantum est actu, unde ens est proprium obiectum intellectus et sic est primum intelligibile sicut sonus est primum audibile. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 5, a. 2. Cf. *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 1.

[23] Nam illud quod primo cadit sub apprehensione intellectus est ens cuius intellectus includitur in omnibus quaecumque quis apprehendit. *Ibid.,* I-II, q. 94, a. 2.

[24] *Ibid.,* I, q. 19, a. 1; q. 80, a. 1.

[25] Omnibus hominibus naturaliter desiderium inest ad sciendum. *In I Met.,* lect. 1, n. 1.

[26] Cf. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 78, a. 1 and ad 3.

[27] *Ibid.,* q. 19, a. 1.

it is the understanding of whatever is. To evaluate the natural tendency of the intellect of man it is necessary to take cognizance of its specific mode of being. The intellect in itself and of itself is not in actual cognitive possession of all that is; rather it is in the beginning in a state of complete potentiality to such perfection. In the now trite expression of Aristotle, it is as a blank tablet on which nothing is written, denominated accordingly the "possible" intellect, receptive of its perfection.[28] There is a common reason for this. For the intellect's inherent perfection is in accord with the perfection of the soul as the form of man. Such a form is of a determined grade of being and perfection in itself, and does not contain in itself actually the perfection of all being, through which all things could be possessed cognitively in the very essence of the soul itself.[29] It is, however, the proper reason for the intellect's potentiality that is of particular pertinence. The intellect is the faculty of the soul, which by nature is united to the body. The body is for the soul; consequently the union of the two is meant to contribute to the perfection of the soul, with regard to the soul's distinctive excellence. The intellect, then, acquires the matter for its operation through the body. It consequently acquires its perfection, passes from potentiality to actual perfection, from imperfection to perfection.[30] The result of the connatural state of union with the body upon the natural desire of the intellect, then, is that this inclination, i. e., to the knowledge of all that is, is a tendency to *acquire* such knowledge.

The first argument of St. Thomas in support of the intellect's natural desire to know emphasizes the acquisitive character of this desire, in conformity with the nature and condition of the human intellect from which it springs.

> Each thing desires its own perfection. Whence even matter is said to desire form, as the imperfect seeks perfection. Since therefore the intellect, by which man is what he is, considered in itself is all things only in potency, and is not reduced into actually being

[28] *Ibid.*, q. 79, a. 2.
[29] Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, *loc. cit.*
[30] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 4.

all things except through science, since it is none of those things that are before intellection, it follows that every one naturally desires science, as matter desires form.[31]

In this argument St. Thomas uses the word *science* formally. Thus understood, this type of intellectual knowledge is the expression of the inclination proper to the nature of the human intellect. It is of some importance to indicate the distinctive sense of the term " science " relative to the elements that are of present significance. These elements are indicated in this, that science is a rational process from a truth known to another previously unknown, and at the term of the process, known with certitude.[32] To be noted, then, are two things implied by the term " science," the rational process itself, the act which is its term.

As a process, science entails the evolving of conclusions as they are derived from principles.[33] In the order of discovery or of acquisition of perfect knowledge, this process is often compared by St. Thomas to movement or generation.[34] Through the exercise of this process by the intellect, the habit of science is generated, which once possessed permits the consideration of this movement, the consideration of conclusions precisely as they are derived from principles.[35] Since the order of metaphysics' discovery is of paramount interest here, it is to be noted that just as movement begins from a fixed point of inception and proceeds to some term, so also the process of science proceeds from principles and reaches a term.[36] The point from which it begins is the principles of its subject; thus

[31] Unaquaeque res naturaliter appetit perfectionem sui, unde et materia dicitur appetere formam sicut imperfectum appetit suam perfectionem. Cum igitur intellectus, a quo homo est id quod est, in se consideratus sit in potentia omnia, nec in actum eorum reducatur nisi per scientiam, quia nihil est eorum quae sunt, ante intelligere, . . . sic naturaliter unusquisque desiderat scientiam, sicut materia formam. *In I Met.*, lect. 1, n. 2.

[32] Cf. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 1, n. 4 (ed. Leon.).

[33] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2, ad 2.

[34] Cf. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 3, n. 6; lect. 41, nn. 7, 8, 9; *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 79, aa. 8, 12.

[35] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, *loc. cit.*

[36] Cf. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 41, n. 8; *Summa Theol.*, I, *loc. cit.*

metaphysics begins from principles of being in common. The term reached is the act of science, the perfect knowledge of the subject, i. e., certain knowledge concerning the subject and dervied through the principles. For the act of science is the effect, the term reached by the process from principles.[37]

As to this perfect knowledge, the act of science, St. Thomas' explanation of the doctrine of Aristotle results in a definition of this act of knowing scientifically as follows:

> Since, therefore, science is perfect knowledge, he says: *When we Know the cause, etc.* Since it is actual knowledge by which we know something absolutely, he adds: . . . *As the cause of that fact and of no other, etc.*; and since it is certain knowledge, he further adds: . . . *And further that the fact could not be other than it is.*[38]

This act of knowing scientifically is the result of the process that leads up to it. It is the knowledge of the conclusion of this process formally as the conclusion, i. e., as derived from the principles. As previously noted, it is only in so formally knowing the conclusion that the act of science is perfected; this is the resolution of the conclusion into its principles.[39] St. Thomas notes concerning this meaning of the act of science that it refers to science in the perfect sense, not to science as knowledge of causes through their effects, or to science in the widest sense, in which one is said to have "science" of indemonstrable principles.[40] Taken in its perfect sense, the act of science demands that the process from which it results be composed of propositions which are true, primary, and immediate, not demonstrated through another medium, but self-evident; and further that the process be composed of what is more known, prior, and the cause of the conclusion.[41]

As the highest science, metaphysics is science in the perfect sense.[42] To express the character of metaphysics' extension to

[37] Cf. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 4, n. 9.

[38] *Ibid.*, n. 5. Transl. Conway, Pierre, O. P., *Exposition of the Posterior Analytics of Aristotle*. Quebec: La Librairie Philosophique M. Doyon, 1936. p. 45.

[39] Cf. *De Ver.*, q. 11, a. 1, ad 13.

[40] Cf. *In I Post. Anal.*, *loc. cit.*, n. 8.

[41] Cf. *ibid.*, n. 11.

[42] Cf. *ibid.*, lect. 17, n. 5.

All of the speculative sciences are ordered to the perfection of man as he strives to fulfill the natural capacity of the intellect towards all being. But the things existing in reality which confront man are concrete beings. Thus:

> Each particular science seeks the principles and causes concerning the proper knowable object which is contained under it. . . . And he (Aristotle) gives an example in medical science, which concerns health; similarly it is so with regard to any other science, whether practical or speculative; since each one of these particular sciences sets off and takes to itself some determined sort of being, circumscribing it and dividing it off from other things and determining concerning it alone. For it is concerned with this type of being as with a certain being, but not insofar as it is being. But this, namely, to consider concerning being as it is being, belongs to a special science which is different from all other particular sciences.[45]

Accordingly, in the concrete conditions of his own existence, man is first of all confronted with beings that are of the sensible order, material, mobile. Consequently the first stage of his scientific development is the perfect knowledge of such beings, not formally as they are beings, but regarding their mobility. The first in the order of generation among the speculative sciences is the philosophy of nature, treating of beings precisely as mobile or changeable.[46] It is because they *are* that man's intellect attains them at all; but it is the more obvious conditions of their being that first occur to him to be explained.

All of the particular speculative sciences, explaining beings under some formal aspect, contribute to the fulfillment of man's intellectual capacity. They do not, however, completely satisfy this, since none of them is concerned with being as being.

[45] Omnis scientia particularis quaerit aliqua principia et causas circa proprium scibile quod sub ipsa continetur. . . . Et ponit exemplum de medicativa quae est circa sanitatem . . . et similiter de qualibet scientia alia; sive sit factiva, idest practica, sive doctrinalis, idest theoretica, quia unaquaeque harum scientiarum particularium circumscribit et accipit sibi aliquod determinatum genus entis, circumscribens illud et dividens ab aliis entibus, et de illo solo determinans. Negociatur enim circa hoc genus entis quasi circa aliquod ens, sed non inquantum est ens. Sed hoc, scilicet considerare de ente inquantum est ens pertinet ad quamdam scientiam quae est alia praeter omnes scientias particulares. *In XI Met.*, lect. 7, nn. 2247-2248; cf. *In De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1, ad 6, 30; *In VI Met.*, lect. 1, n. 1147.

[46] Cf. *In I Phys.*, lect. 1.

None of them, in fact, exhausts the intelligibility even of its own proper domain. A revealing statement of St. Thomas apropos of this point is that the metaphysician does consider particular beings, not in regard to their proper characteristics, but in regard to their common characteristic as beings. In this way, even matter and movement pertain to the metaphysician's consideration.[47] Thus it is metaphysics that comes into play for the final fulfillment of the quest of the intellect as "all being lies within the scope of its understanding." In perfect accord with the argument for the natural desire of man for science is St. Thomas' argument for the existence of metaphysics, based upon the necessity of an end corresponding to the natural orientation of the intellect in accord with its form.

> The necessity of this science which considers being and the properties of being, is apparent from this, that such things must not remain unknown, since the knowledge of other things depends upon them, as the knowledge of proper things depends upon the knowledge of what is common.[48]

Without a knowledge of being as such, precisely as it is fundamental, common to all reality, the perfect understanding of whatever is, ever sought by the intellect, must remain unfulfilled. For even the proper notes of things depend for their ultimate intelligibility upon being. Thus a science attaining perfect knowledge of being as such is demanded by the natural capacity of the intellect; it is the expression of this appetite to fulfill itself. In this is to be found the reason for the existence of metaphysics.

To insist that it is in terms of its being the supreme *science* that metaphysics fulfills the natural desire of the intellect, is to manifest the necessity of metaphysics' extension to the knowledge of God. In this way, what has been designated as principle of extension for the reflective judgment of metaphysics, has its force.

[47] Cf. *In De Trin., loc. cit.*, a. 4, ad 6, 51.

[48] Necessitas autem huius scientiae quae speculatur ens et per se accidentia entis ex hoc apparet quia huiusmodi non debent ignorata remanere cum ex eis aliorum dependet cognitio, sicut ex cognitione communium dependet cognitio rerum propriarum. *In IV Met.*, lect. 1, n. 531.

Attention has already been directed towards St. Thomas' formal use of the word *science* in his argument for the natural desire of the intellect. In a second argument for this desire, he carefully distinguishes the terms "to understand" (*intelligendum*) and "to know scientifically" (*sciendum*). In man the basic tendency of the intellect to understand issues in a desire for scientific knowledge.[49] Because he naturally seeks to understand, man naturally tends to understand all things. But because he proceeds from potentiality to perfection in knowledge, and does not immediately apprehend all reality by a simple act, his intellect is perfectible through science as an acquisitive process. Nor does he acquire the perfect knowledge he seeks, save in the apprehension of what he considers in terms of its causes, upon which its ultimate intelligibility depends.

> For the principles of the existence of a thing and of its truth are the same. . . . It is necessary therefore for the one who has scientific knowledge, if he knows perfectly, to know the cause of the thing known scientifically.[50]

Because the natural appetite of the intellect follows from its nature, whose scope is the understanding of all being, it seeks fulfillment through science, the process that will lead to perfect knowledge through causes. The particular sciences consequently are a search for a knowledge through their causes of those particular aspects of reality with which each science is concerned. Similarly, metaphysics seeks of its very nature the knowledge of being as such through its principles and causes.[51]

[49] Cf. *ibid.*, I, lect. 1, n. 3.

[50] Eadem enim sunt principia esse rei et veritatis ipsius. . . . Oportet igitur scientem si est perfecte cognoscens, quod cognoscat causas rei scitae. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 4, n. 5.

[51] Sciendum siquidem est quod, quaecumque scientia considerat aliquod genus subiectum, oportet quod considerat principia illius generis, cum scientia non perfictur nisi per cognitionem principiorum. . . . Sicut autem uniuscuiusque determinati generis sunt quaedam communia principia quae se extendunt ad omnia principia illius generis, ita etiam et omnia entia secundum quod in ente communicant, habent quaedam principia, quae sunt principia omnium entium . . . uno modo per praedicationem . . . alio modo per causalitatem. . . . *In De Trin., loc. cit.*, corp., 46-47.

In general, science is concerned with the principles of its subject, because the intelligibility of its subject depends upon them. In order to achieve perfect knowledge of this subject, the process of science must reach its term in an understanding of all that pertains to the intelligibility of its subject in terms of such principles. Some of these are immediately apprehended and constitute the proper starting point of the science itself. Others, especially principles which are the extrinsic causes of the subject, are attained only after some development of the science. But the science of the subject is not complete until even such principles are attained and the subject is known as to what pertains to it in terms of its dependence upon such principles. Metaphysics, then, as science, is concerned with the principles of its subject, i. e., with principles common to all beings by way of predication and causality.[52] Certain of the principles of being are immediately apprehended, those most universal principles which are known to all. Others, while most actual and knowable in themselves, are not apprehended from the outset. These are principles common to all beings by way of causality, the divine.[53] Metaphysics, seeking perfect knowledge of being, is not completed until it considers its subject in what pertains necessarily to it in terms of its dependence upon such principles.

The total acquisitive process of the human intellect is embraced in these words of St. Thomas:

> There is naturally present in all men the desire to know the causes of whatever things are observed. Hence, because of wondering about things that were seen but whose causes were hidden, men first began to think philosophically; when they found the cause, they were satisfied. But the search did not stop until it reached the first cause, for " then do we think that we know perfectly, when we know the first cause " (Arist., *Metaphysics* I, 3, 983a, 25).

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[52] Cf. *ibid.*

[53] . . . illa quae est sapientia simpliciter est certissima inter omnes scientias inquantum scilicet attingit ad prima principia entium, quae secundum se sunt notissima, quamvis aliqua illorum, scilicet immaterialia, sint minus nota quoad nos. Universalissima autem principia sunt etiam quoad nos magis nota, sicut ea quae pertinent ad ens inquantum ens, quorum cognitio pertinet ad sapientiam. *In VI Eth.*, lect. 5, n. 1181.

Therefore man naturally desires as his ultimate end, to know the first cause.[54]

The compulsion to seek its perfection in science, imbedded by its nature in the intellect, is expressed in this statement. For wonder, *admiratio*, as it is echoed by St. Thomas from Aristotle, is the contrary of the good of the intellect; it implies doubt, ignorance.[55] This discomfort in the face of realities whose full intelligibility they did not grasp, goaded men to scientific pursuit, to philosophize. Such a search could find satisfaction only in a knowledge of and through causes. For realities which do not manifest in themselves their total explanation, are explicable only through other things; they are effects whose intelligibility includes ultimately their dependence upon their causes. Since all reality, the totality of being, is man's area of competence, this search seeks to explain all being. Its culmination lies necessarily in the attainment of the first cause of whatever is. For man will be led to the realization that all being as being can be explained ultimately only in terms of its dependence upon that first cause. Thus the intellectual nature of man is the explanation of the scientific quest that ultimately must express itself in the existence of metaphysics, which in turn satisfies that quest only in its own termination, in its own extension to a knowledge of its subject in terms of the first cause of whatever has being. Succinctly as ever St. Thomas has clearly expressed this truth:

> For each effect that he knows, man naturally desires to know the cause. Now the human intellect knows universal being. So, he naturally desires to know its cause, which is God alone. . . .[56]

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[54] Naturaliter inest omnibus hominibus desiderium cognoscendi causam eorum quae videntur, unde propter admirationem eorum quae videbantur quorum causae latebant, homines primo philosophari coeperunt, invenientes autem causas quiescebant. Nec sistit inquisitio eorum quousque perveniatur ad Primam Causam; et tunc perfecte nos scire arbitramur quando Primam Causam cognoscimus. . . . Desiderat igitur homo naturaliter cognoscere Primam Causam quasi ultimum finem. III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 25.

[55] Cf. *In I Met.*, lect. 3, n. 55.

[56] Cuiuslibet effectus cogniti naturaliter homo scire causam desiderat. Intellectus autem cognoscit ens universale. Desiderat igitur naturaliter cognoscere causam eius, quod solum Deus est. *Cont. Gent., loc. cit.*

The order of ends and the order of agents correspond. Seen from the vantage point of this truth, metaphysics is recognized as attaining as its term the knowledge of God, the principle of its subject. This is so, because it must be so, because the agent in this process, the human intellect, has as its natural orientation, the perfect knowledge of all that is. Springing from this is the natural desire for science, the desire, so far as this is possible to man, to exhaust the intelligibility of the real. For man must acquire his intellectual perfection and it will be acquired perfectly solely when he has science of being as being. Such science is metaphysics. Its quest in turn will be complete only in the attainment of the first cause of all that is. Only then will the subject of metaphysics be perfectly known, that is, in terms of its dependence upon such a cause. Thus the consideration of the first cause is the end demanded by the nature of metaphysics as it is the expression of the finality inherent in the nature of the human intellect. This is the ultimate force of the text of St. Thomas in the *De Trinitate* seen as the principle regulative of metaphysics' extension to the knowledge of God, and of the reflective judgment to be made concerning the question of God's existence in an authentically Thomistic metaphysics.[57]

[57] It is logically pertinent here to note that in its eventual discovery, metaphysics will affirm, according to the *via causalitatis*, that the first cause is subsistent being. There must be a concomitant acknowledgement of the intellect's inadequacy positively to grasp such a being in its proper mode. Yet the orientation of the intellect to the understanding of whatever is, which gives rise to metaphysics and dictates its termination, also permits some knowledge, albeit analogical and with an infinite distance between the analogues, even of so transcendent a reality. Cf. *I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1: Ad primum dicendum quod sicut Deus non est hoc modo existens sicut ista existentia, sed in eo est natura entitatis eminenter, unde non est omnino expers entitatis: ita etiam non est omnino expers cognitionis, quin cognoscatur, sed non cognoscitur per modum aliorum existentium, quae intellectu creato comprehendi possunt. Cf. also ad 4; *In De Trin.*, q. 1, a. 2, ad 4. Ed. Marietti, *Opusc. Theologica*, II, 323. Thus St. Thomas indicates in vivid contrast the total, universal extension of metaphysics, as science of being as being: Sub nobilissima enim scientiarum apud nos, cadunt non solum suprema in entibus, sed etiam infima; nam Philosophia Prima considerationem suam extendit a primo ente usque ad ens in potentia, quod est ultimum in entibus. I *Cont. Gent.*, c. 70.

II. Comparison with "Principles" of Certain Thomistic Authors

Little need be said about the principle of extension by way of comparison with the thoughts of contemporary authors viewed. None questions the extension of metaphysics to a knowledge of God. But there is some need briefly to contrast the reasons alleged by them for this extension with St. Thomas' own basis for this extension.

Among the manualists, the rather typical work of Fr. Gredt explains this extension, not in terms of the *consideration* of the science, but in terms of its *subject*: being in common, subject of the science, abstracts from created and uncreated, yet extends to each as subjects, and members of its fundamental division. This is the explicit basis for the division of *special metaphysics*. God is the subject of the tract on "uncreated immaterial being," which begins with an investigation of this subject.

For St. Thomas, however, metaphysics extends to the consideration of God for the one reason that as science it must consider the first principles of its subject. It thus must explain being in terms of its dependence upon God, its first cause. The basic reason for the divergent point of view will be discussed subsequently; it is sufficient here merely to make note of the contrast.

Canon Van Steenberghen's work has the merit of insisting upon the extension of what is called *ontology* to the attainment of God as to the ultimate explanation of reality. In his theorizing about the problem of God in philosophy, however, his views are in sharp contrast with those of the Angelic Doctor. His work in general in characterized by insistence upon the process from mind to thing. As to the question of God, it is a datum of religious and human experience that needs formulation as a scientific question in order that such experience may be theoretically explained. Because God is to be nominally defined as unique, provident Creator, the science to which the question belongs must be metaphysics, which can go

from the finite to the infinite. St. Thomas places the attainment of God within the realm of metaphysics' scope for quite different reasons. He allows man's intellect to be measured by the reality which he seeks to know. Metaphysics has as its intrinsic end (*finis operis*) the consideration of God, because the reality man seeks to know cannot be adequately explained except in terms of its first cause. The nature of man, the nature of his search and its termination have an elemental and perennial character in the teaching of St. Thomas. He gives the bare and unalterable facts. That metaphysics and the end it reaches will lend themselves to any extrinsic end (*finis operantis*), ethical, apologetic, humanistic, according to the needs and desires of men who philosophize, is unquestionable. Indeed, the Christian must assign further ends to his pursuit of metaphysics. But to the science as such, such ends are *per accidens*. Its intrinsic reason for being is the fulfillment of man's natural desire for intellectual perfection. God in metaphysics is a philosophical problem, not as the explanation of human experience, nor as a vindication of religion, but as the first cause of the real. The further ramifications in human life resulting from what metaphysics attains will be most fruitful insofar as the problem of God in metaphysics is solved in its own terms, as He is principle of the subject of the science. The consideration of God pertains to metaphysics, not to solve the question whether man can know with certitude that there is a unique, provident Creator, but to solve the questions to which the search for the explanation of the intelligibility of all being gives rise, and in the terms which these questions themselves dictate. While the conclusions in the Canon's mode of proceeding may be the same as those of St. Thomas, the latter's position on the question of God guarantees that the conclusion of metaphysics will have the validity of science, the power to satisfy the intellect's quest.[58]

In the writings of M. Gilson, whose position is reflected also

[58] For a criticism of a theory of metaphysics similar to that which seems to regulate Canon Van Steenberghen's position on the problem of God, cf. Deandrea, M., O.P., *Praelectiones Metaphysicae* (Rome: Angelicum, 1951), I, 71-73.

in Fr. Owens' statement that metaphysics is the science of Him whose act is to be, there is advanced the affirmation that God pertains to metaphysics as principle of its subject; that there is no " special metaphysics " with God as subject. Yet the order of theology is followed in presenting what is designated as the genuine metaphysical thought of St. Thomas about God. This is in conformity with the author's thesis on the historical situation of the development of Christian philosophy. Implicitly at least, this author would seem to have adopted the lines of the *de facto* development as his own philosophical, doctrinal position. Granted a verbal acknowledgement that God does not become the subject of metaphysics, he does present an exposition of the outline of the science so that it begins with the consideration of God. St. Thomas' own homage to the sublime truth revealed in Exodus, on the other hand, never led him to change his epistemological position concerning metaphysics' attainment of God, that is, at the term of its inquiry concerning being, its subject.

Left to himself, according to the eminent historian, St. Thomas defines metaphysics as the science of Being as Being, from God, its true object; and as the science of first truth, the origin of all truth. But the text of the initial chapter of the *Contra Gentes* cited by Gilson does not support the contention that St. Thomas would identify the subject of metaphysics with what he shows to be its end, here and in his other works. Certainly metaphysics attains *being*, attains the *first truth*, and can be described in terms of this end, even as it is graced with the name ' theology " or " divine science," insofar as the principal reality known in it is God.[59] But this attainment of God is its extension to its proper end. To merit the name " theology," which in its principal use has for St. Thomas a far nobler meaning, metaphysics has to work. It cannot assume the prerogative of beginning its pursuit with an inquiry about God. When he indicates the extension of the science, the mode

[59] . . . de quibus omnibus est theologia, idest scientia divina, quia praecipuum in ea cognitorum est Deus, quae alio nomine dicitur metaphysica. *In De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1, 26.

in which it deserves its highest dignity, St. Thomas is speaking for himself. He does so in terms of the nature of the human intellect, not by transcending its nature or connatural development, which even in the philosophical order grace perfects. By reason of the perfection of the intellect, even when its natural perfection is guaranteed by the workings of grace, metaphysics attains God not as starting point, but as term of its process.

PRINCIPLE OF LIMITATION

I. Explanation of the Principle

The text of question five, article four, of the *De Trinitate* contains primarily what has been designated here as the principle of limitation, regulative of metaphysics' attainment of God: that metaphysics considers God exclusively as principle of its subject; that, in terms of the question proposed by this article, "philosophic theology" is concerned with things separated from matter and movement, but (a) with things which can exist apart from matter and movement as with its subject; (b) with things which cannot exist except as separated from matter and movement, only as principles of its subject.[60] From the article's context and development it is quite evident that its primary emphasis and result is to circumscribe and restrict the sense in which metaphysics can be denominated "theology," its consideration be understood as separation. To establish so carefully the limitations of metaphysics in the attainment of the divine, is in fact to guarantee its dignity. For the recognition of the exclusive sense of its consideration of God is the

[60] For the sake of convenience of expression, the following terms will be used to refer to things separated from matter:

The positively separated: . . . de ratione ipsius rei, quae separata dicitur, sit quod nullo modo in materia et motu esse possit, sicut Deus et angeli dicuntur a materia et motu separati.

The precisively separated: . . . non sit de ratione eius, quod sit in materia et motu, sed possit esse sine materia et motu, quamvis quandoque inveniatur in materia et motu, et sic ens et substantia et potentia et actus sunt separata a materia et motu, quia secundum esse a materia et motu non dependent. . . . *In De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 4, 48; cf. *In Met.*, Prooem.

justification of metaphysics' extension in the only terms which, when viewed in its nature as science, are valid. Because the principle of limitation is grounded solidly upon the intrinsic nature and specification of metaphysics as human science, and since the appraisal of the scientific attainment of truth must be based upon the proportion of the science to such truth, this principle is of decisive moment as an assertion of St. Thomas' position regarding the consideration of God in metaphysics. To examine the meaning and force of the principle, to compare it with other positions advanced by Thomistic authors, is the final step towards the formulation of metaphysics' reflective judgment about its own consideration of God's existence.

A. Meaning of the Principle of Limitation

In order to explain the principle of limitation, it is imperative to set out its meaning in the very context of its formulation. As has already been noted, the total conclusion of the article in question states that metaphysics considers God as principle of its subject; that its consideration of things separated is to be proportionately understood.

1. Content of the principle

Neither of the two points concerning metaphysics in this total conclusion is an unsupported statement or part of a fabricated distinction. Both emerge as true conclusions from the total argumentation of the article. That philosophic theology merits this name exclusively because it considers God as principle of its subject, rests for proof upon the inability of the human intellect by its native powers to attain as scientific subject the divinity as it is in itself.[61] This is a philosophical reason, advanced from the vantage point of the sapiential order of judgment from which the Angelic Doctor as theologian views and assays, each in its own proper terms, the levels of the

[61] Cf. *ibid.* Quia autem huiusmodi prima principia, quamvis sint in se maxime nota, tamen intellectus noster se habet ad ea ut oculus noctuae ad lucem solis . . . per lumen naturalis rationis pervenire non possumus in ea nisi secundum quod per effectus in ea ducimur.

intellect's attainment of God. Thus he employs a truth discovered by metaphysics itself, the supreme actuality of the first cause of all being, along with the psychological truth concerning the power and object of the human intellect, in order to indicate the restriction of any philosophical consideration of God. When, finally, the original question at issue in the article is resolved, it is in a conclusion emerging from the force of its premisses. What is involved is an illation based upon an order of primacy rooted in St. Thomas' understanding of science, namely, that speculative science is specified by its proper subject. That the formal character of metaphysics as science is involved, is apparent from the very word "determines," or "considers," employed in the question itself.[62] Thus, when he establishes that the proper subject of metaphysics cannot be the positively separated, but solely the precisively separated, the consideration of metaphysics, its nature as science, is accordingly indicated. It does consider things separated from matter and movement, but it considers as subject exclusively things precisively separated; its consideration of the positively separated is solely the consideration of principles of its subject.

Upon the manifestation of pertinent points of this argumentation and then of the necessary force of the conclusion, depends the appreciation of the principle of limitation. To summarize this manifestation, St. Thomas' argumentation can thus be formulated:

The consideration of any speculative science is determined according to the proper, specifying subject of the science.

But the proper subject of metaphysics is the precisively separated; the positively separated are attainable solely as principles of its subject.

Therefore metaphysics determines or considers concerning the precisively separated alone as subject; concerning the positively separated, solely as principles of its subject.

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[62] Cf. *ibid.* Sciendum siquidem est quod quaecumque scientia considerat aliquod genus subiectum, oportet quod consideret principia illius generis . . .; also ad 6; a. 1; I *Cont. Gent.*, c. 70; *In Met.*, Prooem.; II, lect. 1, n. 273; XI. lect. 7, nn. 2247-2248; *In I Eth.*, lect. 1, nn. 1-2; *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2 and ad 2.

What is involved in the principle of limitation is the proportion of metaphysics towards certain realities which it confronts in its unfolding as a scientific process. This principle emerges from the premisses indicated. Understanding it, then, depends upon an explanation of the role of the proper subject of speculative science as it specifies and thus regulates the science's consideration. From the sense of this specifying function, the restricted sense of metaphysics' subject will be seen as necessary. Thus the establishment of the principle of limitation will be clearly evident.

2. The specification of metaphysics as speculative science

To state that metaphysics is specified by its proper subject is, of course, simply to particularize a canon which is universal in St. Thomas' conception of speculative science. For all the speculative sciences are so specified. It is, however, of some importance to recall the sense of this canon, first in terms of the purely formalized structure of science; then concretely, according to the function and constitution of the speculative sciences in the actual intellectual development of man.

a. Proper subject, specificative of scientific process

From previous pages it is to be recalled that science understood as discursive process is of peculiar significance in viewing metaphysics in its attainment of truth; it emphasizes the characteristics of science as a distinctive kind of intellectual knowledge; it is this sense of the term which St. Thomas employs when discussing the proper features of the scientific structure. Science, understood as a discursive process leading to perfect knowledge concerning its subject, is specified by this proper subject.[63]

[63] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 7. A discussion of the precise uses and distinctions concerning the terms "subject" and "object" is not of present urgency. Cf. Cajetan, *Comm. in I Partem*, q. 1, a. 3, nn. 4, 5; John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, in q. 1 Primae Partis, Disp. 2, a. 11, I, 402 (Solesmes). As to the specification of sciences, it is true to say that in St. Thomas' usage science as habit and act is spoken of as specified by its formal object (*formalis ratio obiecti*): cf. I, q. 1, a. 3 and ad 2; II-II, q. 1, a. 1; as process, by its subject: cf. *I Sent.*, Prol.; *In VI Met.*, lect. 1; *In Post. Anal.*, I and II, passim.

i. The subject and the scientific structure

To express the meaning of the specificative role of the proper subject in a formalized, general view of the scientific structure, the term "specify" may simply be understood as indicating that the subject constitutes this acquisitive process as such. Subsequently it will be seen that the various actual scientific subjects determine and diversify the several speculative sciences.

To understand the function of the proper subject, it is necessary to recall the framework of the scientific process in these terms:

> That of which the science is sought through demonstration is a certain conclusion in which a proper passion is predicated of some subject, which conclusion is inferred from certain principles.[64]

The subject, then, is that about which science is acquired in a conclusion; it is that term about which knowledge is gained through the scientific process.[65]

Furthermore, the subject is indicated by St. Thomas to be the subject of the principles of the science. For the whole science is virtually contained in its principles.[66] The proper

[64] Id cuius scientia per demonstrationem quaeritur est conclusio aliqua in qua propria passio de subiecto aliquo praedicatur; quae quidem conclusio ex aliquibus principiis infertur. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 2, n. 3.

[65] Cf. *In Met.*, Prooem. Hoc enim est subiectum in scientia cuius causas et passiones quaerimus, non autem ipsae causae alicuius generis quaesiti. Nam cognitio causarum alicuius generis est finis ad quem consideratio scientiae pertingit. Also *In De Trin., loc. cit.; In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 41, n. 7; *In I Sent.*, Prol., q. 1, a. 4.

The term *passio*, which is used in this context of science, is to be understood in the light of the following: Passiones etiam dicuntur quaecumque de illo (subiecto) probari possunt, sive negationes, sive habitudines ad alias res. *In De Trin.*, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3. In the formalized ideal of scientific demonstration, the first sense of the term is based upon the conception of a subject whose proper accidents, arising out of the intrinsic constitutive principles of the subject, are demonstrated of the subject and predicated of it in the conclusion. But the complete sense of the term must also include all the modifications necessarily attributed to the subject, upon which its complete intelligibility depends, and which are sought through science.

[66] Idem autem est subiectum principiorum et totius scientiae, cum tota scientia virtute contineatur in principiis. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 7. The Benziger edition of the translation of this article, uses the term "object," for the Latin *subiectum*.

St. Thomas uses the term *subiectum* strictly, as distinct from the subject in a

subject of a science is thus subject both of the conclusion and of the principles. The connexion here involved rests upon the character of science as a process, as having a similarity to movement. Because of the function of the subject in this process, it is said to specify in the basic sense of constituting science to be this distinct sort of intellectual process. The subject about which knowledge is sought, is the end or term of this process; and the process must proceed to this term from a certain, fixed starting point, the principles of the science.[67] It is in terms of the need for such a starting point that the decisive role of the subject, as subject of these principles, becomes apparent. For the very nature of the discursive process as a movement from imperfection to perfection, depends upon the subject and the initial knowledge of that subject even as it depends upon its principles.

The mode of intellectuality proper to man, consonant with his nature, entails an evolution from potentiality to act. The discursive process of science is one expression of this, the one discursive process, in fact, which terminates in the perfection of necessary and certain truth possessed.[68] As discursive, science evidences the characteristic of all reasoning as distinguished against the simple and immediate grasp of truth. Not intuitive of the total comprehension of any reality, the human intellect must come gradually to a perfect knowledge of what it knows, through composition and division between the various elements of a thing gradually apprehended. It must combine these judgments in order to arrive at further knowledge concerning things, in a process of reasoning.[69] This gradual development of the human intellect is truly an acquisition of knowledge, a growth from within in which the intellect is not a purely passive subject, but active in the acquisition of further knowledge.[70] That it have such a role, however, a starting point

material and wide sense, which is applied to anything whatsoever considered in a science. Cf. *In I Sent., loc. cit.*, a. 3, sol. 1. In the present context the proper subject is intended.

[67] Cf. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 41, nn. 7-8; *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 79, aa. 8, 12.

[68] Cf. *ibid.*, lect. 1, nn. 4-5.

[69] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 6.

[70] Cf. *De Ver.*, q. 11, a. 1.

is necessary. This St. Thomas places, in the order of reasoning, in the connatural apprehension of certain first principles. These are also the norm for the verification of the discoveries of the process of reasoning.[71] The discursive process of man's intellect, then, demands a fixed point of departure and of reference.

The latter point as verified in the total operation of man's discursive process, is of some importance in recognizing the role of the subject in science, as this is a particular phase of the discursive life of man. Concerning the total development of man's reason as it is directed towards the acquisition of knowledge, it is to be noted that since man *learns,* since the intellect reduces itself from potency to actual knowledge, there must be a starting point in some sort of actual knowledge possessed. This initial actualization is the connatural apprehension of first principles, from which all further development can proceed. But these principles themselves are not innate; there is something anterior in nature even to the knowledge of the primary propositions of speculative reason. This is the first apprehension of being.

> Now a certain order is to be found in those things which are apprehended universally. For that which, before aught else, falls under apprehension is *being,* the notion of which is included in all things whatsoever a man apprehends. Wherefore, the first indemonstrable principle is that *the same thing cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time,* which is based on the notion of *being* and *not-being.*[72]

The primitive apprehension of being, derived through the first intellectual contact with the data provided by the senses, is, to be sure, a most general, confused knowledge. Being is apprehended as a kind of universal whole, whose particular aspects are vaguely and confusedly known.[73] But it is an *intellectual*

[71] Cf. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 79, aa. 8, 12; *De Ver.,* q. 8, a. 15.

[72] In his autem quae in apprehensione hominis cadunt, quidam ordo invenitur. Nam illud quod primo cadit sub apprehensione est ens, cuius intellectus includitur in omnibus quaecumque quis apprehendit. Et ideo primum principium indemonstrabile est, quod non est simul affirmare et negare, quod fundatur supra rationem entis et non entis; et super hoc principio omnia alia fundantur. *Summa Theol.,* I-II, q. 94, a. 2; cf. *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 1.

[73] Cf. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 85, a. 3; *In I Met.,* lect. 2, n. 46. Magis universalia

knowledge; connaturally the value of being is grasped. Upon that apprehension the absolutely first principle of reason follows; its self-evident truth is based upon the known value of being, its subject. Through the first self-evident principles, man's potency to learn is somehow active, in the sense that through these he is enabled to proceed to discover new truths about particular matters which confront him.[74] The point to be here emphasized is that as these first principles lie at the basis of all man's purely intellectual development, so the first principles themselves arise from the apprehension of being. Being is that to which the intellect is ordained; it is involved in all man's apprehensions; it is the ultimate, inherent foundation of the first principles which make man's discursive development possible.

Science, as pertaining to the discursive power of man, must manifest in its own way the workings of all human reasoning. Thus, following Aristotle, St. Thomas begins his determinations regarding the scientific process with the dictum: "Science is made actual in us through some pre-existing science." [75] Contrary to any theory of Platonic "reminiscence," or of innate ideas, he insists that in the process of science, the intellect truly acquires the fuller knowledge which it seeks concerning the subject. Such knowledge is gained in a conclusion towards which the intellect is first in potency. But the latter is not a purely passive potency; there is some pre-existent knowledge which renders the intellect capable of perfecting the process by which the actual knowledge towards which the potency is ordered will be gained. Such pre-existent knowledge is properly the knowledge of the principles of the science. In the actual apprehension of these principles, the conclusion is virtually,

secundum simplicem apprehensionem sunt primo nota . . . nam primo in intellectu cadit ens . . . et prius in intellectu cadit animal quam homo.

[74] Scientia ergo praeexistit in addiscente in potentia non pure passiva sed activa; alias homo non posset per seipsum acquirere scientiam. . . . Processus autem rationis pervenientis ad cognitionem ignoti in inveniendo est ut principia communia per se nota applicet ad determinatam materiam, et inde procedat in aliquas particulares conclusiones et ex his in alias. . . . *De Ver.*, q. 11, a. 1.

[75] Scientia fit in nobis actu per aliquam scientiam in nobis praeexistentem. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 1, n. 8.

potentially known, and the process to actual knowledge of the conclusion has a starting point.[76] The actual apprehension of the principles initates the process of the science to its certain conclusions, even as the processes of nature depend upon their active causes.[77] Because of the character of scientific knowledge, its certainty and necessity, the quality of these principles of the science is rigidly determined.[78]

What is here pertinent, however, is the realization that if the principles of the science are essential to the constitution and realization of the scientific process, then the decisive role of the subject of the science is indicated. For the subject of the science is the subject of the principles of the science. In one condition regarding the knowledge of the principles prerequisite for the scientific process, the critical role of the subject is brought out. As propositions, these principles must be known to be true.[79] This in turn demands a previous knowledge of the subject of the science, which is a knowledge of its real quiddity, of its nature expressed in a real definition. For into such knowledge the truth of the principles of the science is ultimately resolved.

Not only a proposition but also a definition is called the principle of a syllogism. Or one might say that although a definition is not a proposition in act, it is nonetheless virtually a proposition, since once the definition is known it is seen that the definition may be truly predicated of the subject.[80]

Emphasizing the primacy exercised by the subject and its definition among all the elements of the scientific process, then, St. Thomas states:

Aristotle here appears to say that the definition of the passion is the middle in demonstration. But it is to be considered that the definition of the passion cannot be accomplished without the defi-

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[76] Cf. *ibid.*, n. 9; lect. 3, nn. 1, 6; *De Ver., loc. cit.*

[77] Cf. *ibid.*, lect. 3, n. 1.

[78] Cf. *ibid.*, lect. 4, ss.

[79] Cf. *ibid.*, lect. 2, n. 3: Unde cum principium sit enuntiatio quaedam non potest de ipso praecognosci quid est, sed solum quia verum est.

[80] Cf. *ibid.*; also lect. 41, n. 8.

nition of the subject. For it is plain that the principles which the definition of the subject contains, are the principles of the passion. Therefore a demonstration is not resolved into the first cause unless there is taken as the middle of demonstration the definition of the subject.[81]

What is involved here is that science as a process results in a conclusion, a proposition expressing certain knowledge of the pertinence of a property or passion to its subject. Because of the principles or premisses leading to it, the conclusion is certain; it is knowledge in terms of the cause of the pertinence of the property to this subject. The principles themselves are propositions in which the constitutive principles of the subject are stated. They are the basic reason for the subject having the property asserted of it. The principles of the science, then, must be reduced to the apprehension of the subject in its real nature, expressed in a real definition. Thus the ultimate into which the scientific process is reduced and from which it proceeds is its proper subject, just as the total discursive power of man depends for its functioning upon the initial apprehension of being, from which in turn the first indemonstrable principles are derived.

The process of science as such, then, is rendered possible primitively by the knowledge of the quiddity of the proper subject of the science, expressed in a real definition. This latter is the fundamental medium of demonstration for the whole scientific process, the basic source of the formally scientific intelligibility of all that is gained in the science. The role of the subject is determinative, constitutive of the process from principles to conclusions. For the first principles of the science are the affirmation of the definition of the subject. It is thus a quidditative knowledge, an adequate knowledge of the nature

[81] Videtur hic Aristoteles dicere quod definitio passionis sit medium in demonstratione. Sed considerandum est quod definitio passionis perfici non potest sine definitione subiecti; manifestum est enim quod principia, quae continet definitio subiecti, sunt principia passionis. Non ergo demonstratio resolvet in primam causam nisi accipiatur ut medium demonstrationis definitio subiecti. *In II Post. Anal.*, lect. 1, n. 9; cf. *ibid.*, I, lect. 2, n. 5.

of the subject that is the basic knowledge required beforehand and constitutive of the science.[82]

In fine, the subject of the science, the subject of its principles, is the subject as well of the conclusions. The passage which is the scientific process depends upon the knowledge of the definition of that subject. This definition expresses the nature of the subject; as it is the principle of the total ontological comprehension of the subject, so also is it the fundamental medium of demonstration by which that comprehension is gradually attained by the intellect. Obviously science of the real cannot be a simple deductive analysis of the implications of the definition of the subject. There is need of constant reference to the experience which reveals the actual conditions of the subject; which suggests new aspects of its nature, new questions concerning its modification, and especially its relationships with other realities. But in all this, the notion of the subject must be the norm of interpretation, the key to discovery, and the source of properly scientific knowledge of what necessarily and certainly pertains to the total comprehension of that subject. In the light of the decisive role of the proper subject of science, then, its role as specificative of the scientific process is evident.[83]

ii. Determination of the actual subjects of speculative sciences

The sense in which the proper subject is fundamentally constitutive of the scientific process as such, has been examined from the point of view of the formalized structure of science.

[82] The knowledge of the subject may be derived from another science; it may be developed by the dialectic anterior to the actual scientific process. It must be attained before the process can begin. Thus, for example, since there is no science anterior, St. Thomas, in his commentary on Aristotle, devotes the first book of the *Physics* to a consideration of the nature of the subject of natural philosophy. Cf. ***In I Phys.*, lect. 1, n. 1.**

[83] Note that the discussion is concerned with science in the perfect sense, resulting, namely, in *propter quid* knowledge. This is the sense of science developed at the outset of the *Posterior Analytics*. Since metaphysics is such science, insofar as it is the supreme science (cf. *In I Post Anal.*, lect 17, n. 5), it is this notion of science that is here pertinent.

But this, as indeed all of logic itself, presupposes the proper orientation of the human intellect to the attainment of the real. In order to appreciate the context of St. Thomas' formulation of the principle of metaphysics' limitation regarding God, it is necessary to recall how, concretely, the considerations of the various speculative sciences are constituted by their proper subjects. For the formulation of the principle of limitation employs terms arising out of previous determinations concerning this constitution.

The subject of science exercises its decisive function insofar as the human intellect through the acquisitive process typical of it, proceeds from imperfection to perfection. Concretely to determine how in their distinctive constitutions the various sciences fulfill the intellect's natural quest for perfect knowledge of all reality, is to begin with the truth that their constitutive subjects are the realities themselves which the intellect seeks to know.[84] This constant in St. Thomas' doctrine can neither be overlooked nor exaggerated. It is through the speculative sciences that man attains the fulfillment of his intellectual capacity. Any determination about science must keep in view its orientation towards the real.[85] While the designation of the intelligibility, the speculability, the scientific knowability of things involves certain rational norms and distinctions, it is also true that these are denominations placed upon the ontological structure, the being, the reality of that which constitutes and distinguishes science and which science considers.[86]

While keeping in mind this fundamental determinant, further precisions are indeed necessary in order to delineate the actual scientific subjects of speculative science. The basic reason for

[84] Cf. *In De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1, 25-26: Speculativarum vero scientiarum materiam oportet esse res quae a nostro opere non fiunt. Unde earum consideratio in operationem ordinari non potest sicut in finem, et secundum harum rerum distinctionem oportet scientias speculativas distingui. Cf. also *In I Eth.*, lect. 1, nn. 1-2.

[85] Cf. II *Cont. Gent.*, c. 75. Text above, footnote 44.

[86] Cf. *De Ver.*, q. 11, a. 1; II *Cont. Gent.*, c. 75; *In Met.*, IV, lect. 1, n. 580; VI, lect. 1, nn. 1147-1148; XI, lect. 7, n. 2247; *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 94, a. 2; *In De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1, ad 6.

such delineations is the character of the union in knowledge involved in the scientific consideration. For there must be a proportion, rendering such a union possible, between the knowing power and that which is known, since "the intellect or science in act is one with the thing known in act." [87] Consequently the existent realities with which human scientific knowledge is concerned are constituted as scientific subject only insofar as they are proportioned to being scientifically attained. Nor, consequently, are all their differences determinative of diverse speculative sciences.[88] St. Thomas indicates that the specifying subjects of the speculative sciences are themselves constituted and diversified as such by that which marks them as scientifically knowable or speculable; by that which *per se* belongs to them in view of their attainability by speculative science.[89] The designation of these constitutive and diversifying characteristics is this: that to the scientifically knowable as such belongs remoteness from matter and movement; that, accordingly, the subjects of speculative science are distinguished by reason of degrees of such remoteness.[90]

[87] Cf. *Q. D. de Anima*, a. 5, ad 1: Nam intellectus possibilis et res quae intelligitur non sunt idem, sed intellectus sive scientia in actu est idem rei scitae in actu. Cf. also *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 4.

[88] Cf. III *Sent.*, d. 27, q. 2, a. 4, sol. 2: Ad secundam quaestionem dicendum quod, ut dictum est, habitus specificantur ex obiectis suis secundum rationem quam principaliter attendunt. Ratio autem obiecti sumitur secundum proportionem rei circa quam est operatio habitus vel potentiae, ad actum animae in qua sunt habitus vel potentiae. Quia autem per operationem animae dividuntur quandoque quae secundum rem conjuncta et summe unum sunt, ideo contingit quod ubi est res eadem, sunt diversae rationes obiecti. . . . Et similiter ubi res est communis, est ratio obiecti particularis et propria; sicut philosophia prima est specialis scientia, quamvis consideret ens secundum quod est omnibus commune, quia specialem rationem entis considerat secundum quod non dependet a materia et motu.

[89] Cf. *In De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1: Sciendum tamen quod, quando habitus vel potentiae penes obiecta distinguuntur, non distinguuntur penes quaslibet differentias obiectorum, sed penes illas quae sunt per se obiectorum inquantum sunt obiecta. . . . Et ideo oportet scientias speculativas dividi per differentias speculabilium inquantum speculabilia sunt. Ed. cit., 26.

[90] Cf. ibid., also *In I Phys.*, lect. 1, n. 1. Sciendum est igitur quod cum omnis scientia sit in intellectu, per hoc autem aliquid fit intelligibile in actu quod aliqualiter abstrahitur a materia; secundum quod aliqua diversimode se habent ad materiam ad diversas scientias pertinent.

This determination of the formal constitutives of the scientific subjects is to be understood in the following way: these scientific subjects specify the scientific process when, in the union of intellection, the intellect through the knowledge of the subject proceeds to acquire further, certain knowledge sought. Thus the scientific process exists in the intellect. To designate the characteristics of existent reality as apt to be known scientifically is to appraise reality in view of the intellective union in which it is to be involved.[91] Because this union is intellectual knowledge, the things to be considered are denominated knowable in terms of remoteness from matter as the source of unintelligibility. Because the kind of intellectual knowledge to result is to be scientific knowledge, a process leading necessarily to certitude, the things to be considered are denominated knowable in terms of remoteness from movement as a source of contingency. Thus, in a word, the realities which are the subjects of speculative science are such, and are diversified as such, by reason of their immateriality and necessity.[92]

The realities towards which science, as the expression of the natural desire of the intellect, is orientated, are denominated speculable or knowable, in terms of their immateriality and necessity. These designations should not obscure the ontological direction of science, that " that which is understood is the intelligible essences of things existing outside the soul. . . . For the arts and sciences were discovered for the purpose of knowing things as existing in their own nature." [93] It is the ontological constitution of things which renders possible the scientific attainment of the total comprehension of things considered. The indication of immateriality and necessity as constitutive and distinctive of scientific subjects does not set aside this truth, but rather serves to emphasize it. For it is the actual condition of the realities with which man is concerned as compared with the character of scientific knowledge, that un-

[91] Cf. III *Sent., loc. cit.*
[92] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1; *In I Phys., loc. cit.*
[93] II *Cont. Gent.*, c. 75.

derlies the discernment of immateriality and necessity. These realities, obviously, are material even to individuality, and thus are contingent. In order, however, to indicate that there is not a total obstacle to intelligibility and scientific knowability, St. Thomas indicates that the ontological aspects of such things admits of a certain remoteness from matter and movement, in such a way as to be the basis of diverse speculative considerations.

This general classification of things as speculable according to their remoteness from matter and movement is twofold: some things depend upon matter according to their being (*secundum esse*); others do not. As to the first, such things are subdivided: some depend upon matter in being and in knowledge, since sensible matter is of their essence and is placed in their definition; some depend upon matter as they exist, but can be understood without sensible matter, since their essence as such does not depend upon it and can thus be defined without it. The first kind of things specifies the consideration of natural philosophy; the second, of mathematics.[94] As to those things which are separated according to their being from matter and movement, there is the subdivision into the precisively and the positively separated, already indicated. Thus there is the foundation for a further level of consideration, that of metaphysics.[95]

Regarding the formalized structure of science, the proper subject has been seen to be specificative, in that it is through the subject known in its essential constitutive that the intellect exercises the process which results in further knowledge sought concerning this subject. Concretely, in terms of the realization

[94] Within these levels there are many species of scientific subjects according to the varied essences of material things. Thus there are many subdivisions of natural philosophy and of mathematics. Within each of these, however, there is a degree of universality and certitude consistent with the degree of remoteness from matter and movement, common to all natural things or to all mathematical aspects of material things. Thus in terms of scientific certitude, the considerations of natural philosophy and mathematics are distinguished. Within each of these, in terms of that which is known, there can be as many particular sciences as there are specifically distinct natures.

[95] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1, 26-27.

of the intellect's speculative capacity, the proper subjects of speculative science are seen to be constituted according to a threefold level of attainability insofar as the natures of things admit of a threefold remoteness from matter and from contingency. In a word, these distinctions of things are indicated by St. Thomas as given. In the actual exercise of science it is according as things thus enter into the union of scientific knowledge that the constitution and division of the speculative sciences result. Attention must now be directed to this last point in order to complete the explanation of the context of the principle of metaphysics' limitation in its consideration of God.

b. The actual consideration of the speculative sciences

Thus far no mention has been made of that hallmark of all scholastic epistemological discussion, abstraction. This advisedly chosen restraint is directed towards an emphasis on St. Thomas' procedure, the passage from the specifying subject to the specified scientific consideration, with the indication of the foundation of the distinct considerations in the very realities considered. But abstraction must be faced, for it is indeed the bridge over many of the gaps in what has thus far been said concerning the sciences, the solution to an obvious difficulty introduced by St. Thomas himself. This difficulty, presupposing rightly that science from its very origins is totally orientated towards truth, towards the grasp of the real, alleges that to see the science of mathematics as constituted by its subject so as to be a consideration of the realities involved, omitting matter and movement, is to destroy it as science. For these realities do not exist except in matter and movement.[96] To obviate this difficulty, St. Thomas indicates that one must understand how the *intellect can abstract.*[97]

[96] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 3, obj. 1, 36.

[97] Utrum mathematica consideratio sit sine materia et motu de his quae sunt in materia et motu. . . . Responsio—Dicendum quod ad evidentiam huius oportet scire quomodo intellectus secundum suam operationem abstrahere possit. *Ibid.*

i. Abstraction as a psychological fact

Presupposed to the determinations regarding abstraction in the context of scientific consideration, are certain fundamentals relative to abstraction as a psychological fact in human intellection. Abstraction itself is an analogical term. The character of the prime analogate is thus expressed by St. Thomas:

> The human intellect holds a middle place; for it is not the act of an organ, yet it is a power of the soul which is the form of the body. . . . And therefore it is proper to it to know a form existing individually in corporeal matter, but not as existing in this individual matter. But to know what is in individual matter not as existing in such matter is to abstract the form from individual matter which is represented by the phantasm.[98]

Abstraction in this primary sense is human intellection, an immanent operation of the human intellect "inasmuch as it considers the nature of things in universal. . . ." [99] By intellect is meant the possible intellect, so denominated because as specifically human it must acquire its perfection, the actual understanding of reality. The possible intellect as an effective principle actually elicits this operation when it is united with the actually intelligible. Since it is human intellection, it regards that which is proportioned to it, the nature of material things. Yet such things exist as material singulars. When they are known by the human intellect, they must be known without their individualized material conditions. Thus what the human intellect attains in its proper order of competence is the quiddity or nature of material things, without the material, individual conditions in which these exist. For this reason, human

[98] Intellectus autem humanus medio modo se habet, non enim est actus alicuius organi, sed tamen est quaedam virtus animae quae est forma corporis, ut ex supra dictis patet. Et ideo proprium eius est cognoscere formam in materia quidem corporali individualiter existentem, non tamen prout est in tali materia. Cognoscere vero id quod est in materia individuali, non prout est in tali materia, est abstrahere formam a materia individuali, quam repraesentant phantasmata. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 1. The English translation fails to convey the exact meaning, especially of the final sentence of the citation.

[99] Intellectus noster et abstrahit species intelligibiles a phantasmatibus, inquantum considerat naturas rerum in universali. . . . *Ibid.*, ad 5.

intellection is abstraction in its basic sense, the knowledge of one thing without another. This cognitive sense is the primary sense of the term.

It does, however, lead immediately to a further sense of the term on the same level of human faculties, to the *abstraction* of the agent intellect. To bridge the gap between the order of intellection as such and the material environment of man, Aristotle saw the necessity of such an operation and of such a faculty. For on the one hand the possible intellect has an ordination to attain all being, yet is of itself not in possession of such knowledge, but must acquire it from things. On the other hand, the world of man is a material world. The beings with which man must be concerned are material realities, whose natures are individualized in their existence. They are things " whose intelligibility is due solely to our own making. And all intelligibles derived from sensibles must be of the latter sort, because sensibles are not intelligible in themselves. But the intelligibiles which our intellect understands are derived from sensibles." [100] It is the operation of the agent intellect that effects the actually intelligible [101] which serves as the formal principle in the act of intellection elicited by the possible intellect.[102] The necessity and function of the active intellect, then, is thus stated:

If the agent pre-exists it may well happen that its likeness is received variously into various things on account of their dispositions. But if the agent does not pre-exist, the disposition of the recipient has nothing to do with the case. Now the intelligible in act is not something existing in nature, if we consider the nature of things sensible, which do not subsist apart from matter. And therefore, in order to understand them, the immaterial nature of the passive intellect would not suffice, but for the presence of the

[100] Secundum ordinem intellectuum est ordo intelligibilium. Sed ea quae sunt secundum seipsa intelligibilia sunt superiora in ordine intelligibilium his quae non sunt intelligibilia nisi quia nos facimus ea intelligibilia. Eiusmodi autem oportet esse omnia intelligibilia a sensibilibus accepta: nam sensibilia non sunt secundum seipsa intelligibilia. Huiusmodi autem intelligibilia sunt quae intelligit intellectus noster. II *Cont. Gent.*, c. 96.

[101] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 4, ad 3.

[102] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 14, a. 5, ad 3; q. 85, a. 2, ad 1.

active intellect which makes things actually intelligible by way of abstraction.[103]

This abstraction of the active intellect is not knowledge; it is the production of the actually intelligible in the sense that it illumines the phantasms and disengages the forms or natures of sensible things from the individual material conditions which they have in their existence and in their representations in the phantasms.[104] The effect of this abstractive operation by the agent intellect is the reception in the possible intellect of the intelligible species of the nature of things, which can thus be understood in the actual act of intellection elicited by the possible intellect.[105]

On the part of the faculties involved in human intellection, there is the possible intellect, first of all. Its immanent operation is knowledge, abstraction, in the sense of an actual union with the actually intelligible aspects of sensible reality, without the individuating conditions prohibitive of intelligibility. Because the things which man understands do exist in such material conditions, however, there must be as well the agent intellect. Its operation is called abstraction in an effective sense, as the producing of species which are intelligible because they are disengaged from individual material conditions. Through these similitudes of the intelligible aspects of things, the possible intellect is enabled to understand the nature of things, "to know the form of things existing in individual matter, without that matter."

According to the proportion which must exist between the

[103] Ad tertium dicendum quod, supposito agente, bene contingit diversimode recipi suam similitudinem in diversis propter eorum dispositionem diversam. Sed si agens non praeexistit nihil ad hoc faceret dispositio recipientis. Intelligibile autem in actu non est aliquid existens in rerum natura quantum ad naturam rerum sensibilium quae non subsistunt praeter materiam. Et ideo ad intelligendum non sufficeret immaterialitas intellectus possibilis nisi adesset intellectus agens, qui faceret intelligibilia in actu per modum abstractionis. *Ibid.*, q. 79, a. 3, ad 3; cf. q. 84, a. 6; *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 2.

[104] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 3, and ad 4; a. 5, ad 2; q. 85, a. 1, ad 4; *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 6.

[105] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 4, ad 4. Obviously the intentional character of such species as they are formal principles by which the actual union of intellection with the reality understood, takes place, is here presupposed.

cognitive faculty and that which it knows, then, a third sense is associated with the term " abstraction." The natures or forms which the intellect knows by abstraction are denominated " abstract." For they are forms or natures existing with individual matter, but known without that matter. It is important to note, however, that in the application of this reference of abstraction to the things as they exist in the intellective union, St. Thomas never loses sight of the orientation of the intellect towards the realities themselves. That which is known is the form or nature or quiddity of material things. The intellect of man as intellect is concerned with intelligible being; it attains the entitative constitution of things. To express this truth within the framework of the abstractive character of the human intellect, St. Thomas uses various terms, " essence," " nature," " form," " quiddity," all as indicative of that which the intellect attains. In his explanation of these terms, he emphasizes that that which is known is ontologically constitutive of the realities known.[106] It is indeed to insist that the intellect perfectly attains the nature of the realities themselves that he points out the necessity of the intellect's conversion to the phantasm, " in order to perceive the universal nature existing in the individual." [107]

Since things understood exist in the union of intellection according to their entitative constitution solely with regard to their generic or specific perfections, not in regard to their individual matter, they are understood abstractly. The nature

[106] The following explanations of terms by St. Thomas are significant:

Et quia illud per quod res constituitur in proprio genere vel specie est quod significamus per definitionem indicantem quid est res, inde est quod nomen essentiae a philosophis in nomen quidditatem mutatur. . . .

Dicitur (essentia) etiam forma secundum quod per formam significatur perfectio vel certitudo alicuius rei. . . .

Hoc etiam alio nomine natura dicitur . . . secundum scilicet quod natura dicitur omne illud quod intellectu quocumque modo capi potest. Non enim res est intelligibilis, nisi per definitionem et essentiam suam. . . . *De Ente et Essentia*, 1, n. 3 (ed. Marietti). Cf. also the terms, ratio rerum existentium extra animam, naturam speciei vel generis, III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 75; ea quae pertinent ad rationem speciei cuiuslibet rei materialis, *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 1; natura specierum sine individuantibus conditionibus, ad 4; cf. ad 2 and 3.

[107] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 7.

understood, then, is denominated universal, or the abstract universal, from the condition which it has in being understood.[108] This denomination of that which is understood by the intellect as "abstract," "an abstract universal," is to be thus interpreted. The possible intellect actually understands when it is united to the actually intelligible. The source of this immanent operation is not anything in the very being of the intellect, since it is in potency to all things. It thus must acquire the forms, the principles of its operation, from things.[109] But the existent realities which are man's environment are not actually intelligible; their natures are singularized by individuating matter and as such cannot be received intellectually. Thus the nature or quiddity must be united to the possible intellect only through the operation of the agent intellect producing the species or similitude of the thing, intelligible insofar as it is immaterialized as to individuating conditions.[110] This intelligible species is the formal principle to which the operation elicited by the possible intellect is proportioned. Thus what is understood is the nature, generic or specific, apart from individuating principles.[111] The act of intellection is thus abstraction. The nature itself, existing in the union of intellection, vicariously, intentionally through the intelligible species of itself, without individuating matter, is denominated abstract.

What is important, in conclusion, is the assertion of the order among these senses of the term "abstraction," as it is characteristic of human intellection. The operation of the human intellect concerned with existent reality must be abstraction. Since this takes place only insofar as actually intelligible species are possessed by reason of the operation of the agent intellect disengaging these from material conditions, the latter operation is also necessary and is called abstraction in an effective, quasi-mechanical sense which is non-cognitive. The term is finally applied as a denomination to the nature of that

[108] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 85, a. 2, ad 2; a. 3, ad 1, ad 4; II *Cont. Gent.*, c. 75.
[109] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 2; q. 84; a. 5.
[110] Cf. *Cont. Gent., loc. cit.*
[111] Cf. *ibid.; Summa Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 4.

which is known by reason of the condition it has in human intellection. It remains true, however, that while this denomination is derived from the character of human intellection, the thing itself according to its entitative constitution remains specificative and regulative of the intellectual operation; and the thing itself is that which is attained.[112] It is apparent as well that while the humanly intelligible is the " abstractable," and that which is understood is " the abstract," the origin of the denominations in the character of the act of intellection, does not deprive the thing understood in its essential reality of its primacy as the formal principle, through its species, in that act of intellection. " That which is understood is the very intelligible essence of things existing outside the soul, just as things outside the soul are seen by corporeal sight."

ii. Considerations of the speculative sciences, " the three degrees of abstraction "

The consideration of speculative science is specified by its proper subject. In view of the diversity of reality as attainable by the human intellect scientifically, the constitution of scientific subjects is indicated according to a threefold level of their remoteness from matter and movement. In indicating the kinds of scientific considerations, specified by the attainment of such scientific subjects, St. Thomas indicates two basic points: first, that these considerations are " abstractions "; second, by way of re-emphasis, that the realities attained are, insofar as they themselves are " abstractable," regulative, constitutive and distinctive of these abstract considerations.

That the scientific considerations are abstractions results from the constitution and classification of things considered, as they are scientifically attainable by the human intellect. In stating that the scientific considerations are abstractions, the context and orientation of speculative science are emphasized. For it is the real which forms the environment of man that is the context of the classification of the scientifically knowable;

[112] Cf. *Summa Theol., ibid.,* ad 1 and ad 2, where St. Thomas shows the nature of things to be determinative of the validity of abstraction.

it is the real which necessitates its attainment by abstraction, and which diversifies that abstraction. Materially individuated reality is the ambient for man's scientific development. The classification of scientific knowability is placed in terms extending from the minimal sense of remoteness from the obstacle of individual matter to degrees of intelligible content, which is varied as matter in its diverse acceptations is recognized as non-constitutive of the nature of things considered. The scientific considerations constituted as they are attainments of such levels of reality, then, are abstractions in the sense that they are knowledge of one thing without another. The varied senses and refinements of the term as operative in this connection serve to show that these scientific considerations are abstractions precisely because they are considerations of the real, which regulates both what they consider and what they omit.

Abstraction in its primary, formal sense as knowledge is the abstraction of the possible intellect. In the article of the *De Trinitate* (q. 5, a. 3) which confronts the above-mentioned difficulty concerning mathematics' consideration, a kind of minimal sense of the term can be discerned. To abstract is to distinguish one from another, or to understand one thing without another.[113] Corresponding to the twofold operation of the intellect, however, the possibility of a more accurate determination of abstraction is indicated. There is the abstraction which is the understanding of one thing without another with which the thing understood is conjoined in reality, but which is omitted in knowledge.[114] This abstraction corresponds to the first act of the mind, called the understanding of the indivisible, by which the nature of anything is attained.[115] This abstraction is here called abstraction in its strictest sense, its condition being that what it understands apart is conjoined in reality with what is not considered.[116]

[113] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 3, *passim*.
[114] Cf. *ibid.*, corp. and ad 1.
[115] Cf. *ibid.*
[116] Cf. *ibid.* Haec autem distinctio recte dicitur abstractio, sed tunc tantum

The intellect also understands one without another when it understands that one thing does not exist in another or with another.[117] Regarding the very existence of what is considered, this abstraction corresponds to the second operation of the mind, by which it composes and divides, forming affirmative and negative judgments.[118] To this sort of understanding St. Thomas here gives the name *separation;* it regards solely those things which in reality are separated or at least separable.[119]

According to this twofold possibility, abstraction and separation, the proper considerations of the speculative sciences are discernible. In terms of its attainability by scientific knowledge, all reality is embraced in the classification according to a dependence in being upon matter and movement, or a denial of such dependence. There are such areas of reality discernible. From each of them the apt subjects of speculative science are constituted. These subjects specify consequently diverse speculative considerations of them. As to those things which cannot exist except in matter, insofar as they are attained by scientific consideration, this latter will be *abstraction.* Such things, material things considered according to their proper natures, will be understood as to their intelligible and scientifically knowable content, and thus without the individual matter with which they do and must exist. According to the subdivisions of these aspects of reality, there is a further subdivision of the scientific consideration which is abstraction. For some things include in their constitution form and common sensible matter.

quando ea quorum unum sine altero intelligitur sunt simul secundum rem. Ed. cit. 39.

[117] Cf. *ibid.* Secundum operationem qua componit et dividit, distinguit unum ab alio per hoc quod intelligit unum alii non inesse.

[118] Cf. *ibid.*, ed. cit. 38.

[119] Cf. *ibid.* In his autem quae secundum esse possunt esse divisa, magis habet locum separatio quam abstractio. Ed. cit. 40. In the *Summa* St. Thomas thus designates the twofold possibility of abstraction, on the part of the intellect's operations: Ad primum ergo dicendum quod abstrahere contingit dupliciter. Uno modo per modum compositionis et divisionis; sicut cum intelligimus aliquid non esse in alio, vel esse separatum ab eo. Alio modo, per modum simplicis et absolutae considerationis; sicut cum intelligimus unum, nihil considerando de alio. . . . I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 1.

They specify a scientific consideration which is abstraction, because individual matter with which such things exist is not considered, but abstraction, in attaining these things according to their natures, must include both form and common sensible matter. This is called the "abstraction of the universal from the particular" and belongs to natural philosophy.[120]

On the level of material reality as such there is also an accidental nature, which, while not existing except in an individual composite, admits of attainment apart from the matter with which it exists. This is the accidental form, quantity. The scientific consideration which it specifies is also abstraction, the understanding of the nature apart from that with which it must exist. It is called the abstraction of form from sensible matter, that is, the abstraction of the accidental form quantity from other accidents by which a body is sensible. This is the scientific consideration proper to mathematics.[121]

Besides those things which depend upon matter in their existence, there are other things which do not. Accordingly, such things constitute a third possible level of scientific subjects. The scientific consideration by which they are attained is the understanding that such things are not restricted to the material order. It is an understanding that they can *be*, even though divided from matter. The scientific consideration constituted by the attainment of such realities as subjects, then, is separation. It is the scientific consideration by which metaphysics is constituted and distinguished.

Speculative science as a process is specified by its proper subject. In the actual environment of man's scientific develop-

[120] Cf. *ibid.*, ed. cit. 41. St. Thomas here says that this is common to all the sciences in this sense: quia in omni scientia praetermittitur quod per accidens est, et accipitur quod per se est. It is distinctive of natural philosophy, insofar as with regard to material things this is the attainment of the initial level of what is scientifically knowable, and the first level of universality and scientific certitude.

[121] Cf. *ibid.* . . . et sic secundum rationem suae substantiae non dependet quantitas a materia sensibili, sed solum a materia intelligibili. Substantia enim remotis accidentibus non manet nisi intellectu comprehensibilis, eo quod sensibiles potentiae non pertingunt usque ad substantiae comprehensionem. Et de huiusmodi abstractis est mathematica, quae considerat quantitates et ea quae quantitates consequuntur. . . . Cf. also *Summa Theol.* I q. 85, a. 1, ad 2.

ment, the proper subjects of human science are classified by reason of the remoteness of their essential constitution from matter and movement. There are various levels of such remoteness. There are consequently specified various scientific considerations. Because those things which are attained are considered without that matter and movement with which they are either conjoined or from which they are separated, the various scientific considerations are, respectively, abstractions or separation. In terms of the latter, finally, the subjects of speculative sciences can be classified and denominated as either the " abstractable " or the " separable." The abstractable specify the considerations of natural philosophy and mathematics; the separable are the foundation for the scientific consideration of metaphysics.

The specifying function of the subjects of speculative science receives full emphasis as St. Thomas vindicates the validity of mathematical abstraction as science of things which in themselves exist in matter. For in this connection he employs as a general norm, and applies to the particular scientific considerations, this principle: when that through which the essential nature of anything is constituted and through which it is understood has an order and dependence upon some other thing, then the latter cannot be omitted from the consideration of such a nature. Conversely, if no such dependence is verified, then one thing can be understood without that upon which its essential constitution and understanding do not depend.[122]

This is true of abstraction in general as characteristic of human intellection. The twofold sense of abstraction corresponding to the twofold operation of the mind is protected from falsity by respect for this norm. The abstraction corresponding to the first operation of the mind is a knowledge of the true nature, provided nothing constitutive of that nature is

[122] Cf. *ibid.* Quando ergo hoc per quod constituitur ratio naturae et per quod ipsa natura intelligitur (natura ipsa), habet ordinem et dependentiam ad aliquid aliud, tunc constat quod natura illa sine illo alio intelligi non potest. . . . Si vero unum ab altero non dependeat secundum id quod constituit rationem naturae, tunc unum potest ab altero abstrahi per intellectum ut sine eo intelligitur. . . .

omitted.[123] The abstraction corresponding to the second operation of the mind is true as long as what it recognizes as separate from another is truly separated in reality from what is removed in knowledge.[124]

Applied to the speculative sciences, this norm is highly significant. It must be emphasized that the scientific subject is that whose nature, whose essential constitution, is known and expressed in the real definition, which is the radical principle of the whole scientific development. In the case both of scientific abstraction and of separation, the subject attained must be known according to this essential constitution, according to its quiddity or actuality.[125] The justification of the two abstractions, of mathematics and of natural philosophy, consists precisely in pointing out that the material realities considered do not depend for their essential constitution upon the matter omitted from the consideration. In the case of separation, similarly, the foundation, and indeed the necessity, of such a scientific consideration, consist in this, that what is considered exists as to its essential constitution as separated from matter.

It is unnecessary to repeat the particulars of this vindication of the respective scientific considerations in virtue of the realities themselves which specify them. The considerations of speculative science are threefold because the levels of reality as scientifically knowable dictate such considerations. They are true considerations of the real because each of them in overcoming obstacles to scientific knowledge or in penetrating further into the intelligibility of the real, does so insofar as the essential constitutives of what is considered are attained. By reason of the specifying role of their subjects, the speculative

[123] This may be but a remote, generic note of the nature.

[124] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 1; ad 2; *De Trin., loc. cit.*

[125] Cf. *De Trin., ibid.* Cum enim unaquaeque res sit intelligibilis secundum quod est in actu . . . oportet quod ipsa natura sive quidditas rei intelligatur vel secundum quod est actus quidam, sicut accidit de ipsis formis et substantiis simplicibus, vel secundum id quod est actus eius, sicut substantiae compositae per suas formas, vel secundum id quod est ei loco actus, sicut materia prima per habitudinem ad formam . . . et hoc est illud ex quo unaquaeque natura suam rationem sortitur.

sciences are distinguished; the proper consideration of each of them is one of the scientific abstractions or is separation because of the proper subject of each, attained in its essential nature.

B. Force of the Principle of Limitation

To explain the meaning or content of the principle of limitation has been largely a matter of indicating the sense and implications of the specification of metaphysics, as of all speculative science, by its proper subject. From this the meaning of the statement that metaphysics determines concerning the precisively separated as subject, the positively separated solely as principles of its subject, emerges within the framework of the psychology and scientific genesis of man's intellectual perfection. Against this background, the proof of the necessary force of the principle of limitation can be briefly established. This force consists in its being a necessary consequent from the truth that the proper subject of metaphysics is exclusively the precisively separated. Subsequently there is need for some elaboration concerning the actual subject of metaphysics and its connection with the consideration of the positively separated, i. e., God.

In the explanation of metaphysics' necessary extension to the consideration of God, the basis in the connatural finality of the human intellect has been seen. The realization of that finality, however, demands an intrinsic formal principle acquired by the intellect, through which it can initiate and perfect the ultimate process to fulfillment in the science of metaphysics. St. Thomas, accordingly, in placing the foundation for metaphysics as a distinct scientific process, universal, transcendent of material realities as such, whose consideration is separation as against the abstractions of the inferior sciences, does so by pointing out that there are realities or aspects of reality which do not depend upon matter, but which are *separated*. There is thus a basis for a kind of scientific subject constitutive of metaphysics as a science which will be the final realization of the intellect's natural desire to have scientific knowledge of all

things. The separated, however, are of two sorts, the precisively and the positively separated. Even though the latter as they are in themselves, and as metaphysics ultimately discovers them to be, are most actual, complete natures and thus in themselves apt to be considered for their own sakes, they cannot constitute the subject of any purely rational speculative science. The power of the human intellect in the face of such realities in themselves, is as the eye of the owl before the sun.[126] Only on the supposition that the divine reveals itself can the divine be considered as subject of a science. Thus the philosopher can consider the divine exclusively as principles common to all beings, in that science whose proper subject is being as such, metaphysics.[127]

The antecedent to St. Thomas' conclusion concerning the philosophical consideration of the divine, here called the principle of limitation, is the impossibility that the proper subject of metaphysics be the positively separated. This impossibility, in turn, rests upon the incapacity of the human intellect in its native power regarding such realities. Given the reality of the separated both precisively and positively as the foundation of the possibility of metaphysics, then, solely the former are the actual, constitutive subject of the science. The consideration of the science, then, must be proportionately determined.

1. Restriction of the proper subject of metaphysics

The process of speculative science as a true generation, an intellectual movement acquisitive of true knowledge, demands a fixed starting point. As the specifying function of the proper subject of speculative science has been manifested, the structure of the scientific process has been seen to depend upon that subject as upon its irreducible base. Directed towards a vitally developed knowledge of that subject, in the modifications

[126] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 4, ed. cit. 48.

[127] Cf. *ibid.* Unde et huiusmodi res divinae non tractantur a philosophis nisi prout sunt rerum omnium principia, et ideo pertractantur in illa doctrina, in qua ponuntur ea, quae sunt communia omnibus entibus, quae habet subiectum ens inquantum est ens, et haec scientia apud eos scientia divina dicitur.

necessarily pertinent to it, the process depends for its origin and success upon the principles of the pertinence of such modifications. Primitively the knowledge of such principles demands a quidditative apprehension of the subject, an apprehension of the subject in its ontological constitution, expressed in a real definition. The principles of the truth concerning a thing, and of its being, are the same; the nature of the subject is the ontological reason for its properties, for the modification which must be attributed to the subject in its total comprehension.[128] Only through an apprehension of the subject in its essential nature will the intellect be enabled to proceed to acquire the total knowledge of all that necessarily belongs to the subject, and to resolve such knowledge into its principles, as scientific knowledge must be resolved. In a word, the basic virtuality upon which the process of science depends is the subject apprehended in its essential nature. The subject of speculative science specifies; the possibility of the process depends upon the subject. This specificative function is exercised in the attainment of the preknowledge of the subject, its real definition, without which there can be no first principles, thus no scientific process.

St. Thomas' exclusion, then, of the positively separated as the proper subject of metaphysics or of any purely rational science, is obviously necessary. The divine is simply unattainable by the human intellect through its native powers, as a scientific subject. Science is perfective of the human intellect, arising out of and in accord with its needs. The intellect in its own nature as the faculty of the human soul is that in which the scientific process exists; it is the agent by which the process as a vital movement is elicited. The function of the subject as specifying is to confer upon the intellect the formal perfection through which the process can be instituted and brought to its desired term. Such a formal principle is the known nature of that subject. No matter how actual, how " intelligible in itself " any reality is, however, it cannot exercise the role of subject if it transcends the nature of the intellect,

[128] Cf. above note 65, on the sense of *passio*.

in such a way that it cannot be known as to its quiddity, cannot be received as a scientific subject.

The exclusion of the divine as subject of any philosophical investigation in the *De Trinitate* is the repetition of a constant in the doctrine of St. Thomas. As has been said, the speculative sciences are distinguished according as things are distinguished, insofar as these are attainable by the human intellect. In that it is human, the intellectual knowledge of man is acquired from the material order. As knowledge, it is abstraction; it requires as well the effective abstraction of the agent intellect. Thus St. Thomas labels the perfection of the human intellect: "Human wisdom is that which is acquired in a human manner, i. e., by the light of the active intellect." [129]

In terms of the implications of the proper character of human intellection as it is receptive of its perfection, then, he states:

> In every genus, moreover, the passive potentiality is equal in scope to that of the correlative active potentiality, and so there does not exist in nature a passive potentiality without a corresponding natural active potentiality. But the agent intellect makes only the phantasms to be intelligible. Therefore the possible intellect is moved by no other intelligible objects than the species abstracted from the phantasms. And thus it is unable to understand separate substances.[130]

That he speaks here of a proper, quidditative knowledge of such separated substances is apparent from the following:

> The proper object of the human intellect, which is united to a body, is a quiddity or nature existing in corporeal matter; and through such natures of visible things it rises to a certain knowledge of things invisible.[131]

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[129] Humana sapientia est quae humano modo acquiritur, scilicet per lumen intellectus agentis. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 12, a. 2, sed contra.

[130] In omni genere tantum se extendit potentia passiva quantum potentia activa illius generis: unde non est aliqua potentia passiva in natura cui non respondet aliqua potentia activa naturalis. Sed intellectus agens non facit intelligibilia nisi phantasmata. Ergo nec intellectus possibilis movetur ab aliis intelligibilibus nisi a speciebus a phantasmatibus abstractis. Et sic substantias separatas intelligere non potest. II *Cont. Gent.*, c. 60.

[131] Intellectus autem humani qui est conjunctus corpori proprium obiectum est quidditas sive natura in materia corporali existens: et per huiusmodi naturas

Whatever knowledge of separated substances is gained can be solely improper and inadequate, since there is no proper and adequate likeness between material and immaterial realities.[132]

Speaking in the context of the requirements of speculative sciences, then, St. Thomas indicates that their principles are inadequate to the attainment of a proper consideration of separated realities. None of the speculative sciences attains to a knowledge of the proper nature of these things.[133] At the point where metaphysics begins in the natural scientific development, there has been no discovery of the nature of such realities. Furthermore, no such discovery is possible through the proper source of such development, the principles of the speculative sciences.

> Indeed all the proper principles of any science depend on first indemonstrable principles which are self-evident, and we get our knowledge of these from the senses. . . . However, sensible things are not adequate guides to the knowledge of immaterial things. . . . Therefore it is not possible for there to be any science whereby one might achieve understanding of the separated substances.[134]

Since it is not found, nor is it possible, that any of the recognized speculative sciences through their principles attain the quiddity of immaterial realities, there can be no speculative science that has these as its proper subject. The proper subject of speculative science specifies through the preknowledge of its nature. With knowledge of separated substances as to their nature precluded, the human intellect cannot consider such realities as subject of speculative science. The sole knowledge that can be acquired about them is through other realities which show that they exist, and something of their *nature as*

visibilium rerum etiam in invisibilium rerum aliqualem cognitionem ascendit. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 7.

[132] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 88, a. 2 and ad 1.

[133] Cf. III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 41.

[134] Omnia enim propria principia cuiuscumque scientiae dependent ex principiis primis indemonstrabilibus per se notis, quorum cognitionem a sensibilibus accipimus. . . . Sensibilia autem non sufficienter ducunt in cognitionem rerum immaterialium. . . . Non est ergo possibile aliquam scientiam esse per quam ad intelligendas substantias pervenire possit. *Ibid.* Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 3, a. 6.

causes.[125] Such knowledge is not a consideration of these realities as subject; nor once gained, can it lead to a further science specified by these realities as subject, since the basic requisite concerning the subject of science is not and cannot be fulfilled.

In view of the nature of the human intellect, coupled with what is required for the consideration of the specifying subject of science, then, St. Thomas describes the total picture of the human intellect's attainment of the positively separated:

> And therefore it must be otherwise stated, that the human intellective soul, by reason of the union with the body, has its gaze inclined towards the phantasms: wherefore it is not informed to understand anything except through species received from the phantasms. . . . The soul, therefore, while it is united to the body can arise to a knowledge of separated substances to that degree to which it can be led through species taken from the phantasms. But this cannot be to such a point that it understands the quiddity in regard to these. For those separated substances exceed all proportion to these intelligibles; but we can in this manner know that there are separated substances *(quia sunt)* even as through effects that are deficient we reach the causes that excell them, in such a way that we know concerning the causes only that they exist; and when we know that they are excelling causes we know concerning them that they are not like their effects. And this is to know concerning them rather what they are not than what they are. . . .[126]

Neither any distinct speculative science nor metaphysics itself considers the positively separated as scientific subject. The latter is indeed supreme among all purely natural sciences.

[125] Cf. *ibid.*

[126] Et ideo aliter dicendum est, quod anima intellectiva humana ex unione ad corpus habet aspectum inclinatum ad phantasmata: unde non informatur ad intelligendum aliquid nisi per species a phantasmatibus acceptas. . . . In tantum igitur anima, dum est unita corpori, potest ad cognitionem substantiarum ascendere, in quantum potest per species a phantasmatibus acceptas manuduci. Hoc autem non est ut intelligatur de eis quid sunt, cum illae substantiae excedunt omnem proportionem horum intelligibilium: sed possumus hoc modo de substantiis separatis aliquo modo cognoscere quia sunt. Sicut per effectus deficientes devenimus in causas excellentes, ut cognoscamus de eis quia sunt; et dum cognoscamus quia sunt causae excellentes, scimus de eis quia non sunt tales quales sunt earum effectus. Et hoc est scire de eis magis quid non sunt quam quid sunt. *Q. D. de Anima*, a. 16; cf. III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 45.

Its consideration extends to the principles common to all beings, among which principles are the positively separated, the divine. By reason of the attainment of these realities it is " divine science " in the highest sense attributable to any purely human science. Metaphysics' proper subject can be only the precisively separated; the positively separated are attainable solely as principles of that subject.

2. Metaphysics' total consideration

Obviously, the force of any principle of limitation is largely negative, restrictive. To conclude the examination of this principle of metaphysics' limitation, however, it is advantageous to make explicit its bearing upon the total consideration of metaphysics, of which St. Thomas states:

> But although the subject of this science is being in common, in its totality it is said to be concerned with those things which are separated from matter, according to being and reason.[137]

a. Metaphysics' consideration of its subject

In the exclusive sense in which the precisively separated constitute the proper subject of metaphysics, being in common clearly means *being, immaterial or separated*, insofar as in that which is constitutive of it, being as such does not depend upon matter.[138] It is this aspect of reality, as scientifically attainable, which specifies the science of metaphysics. In a statement of profound significance in the total epistemological context of the speculative sciences, St. Thomas asserts the distinctive scientific consideration constituted by such a subject:

> First philosophy is a special science even though it considers being as it is common to all things, because it considers a special aspect of being, according as it does not depend upon matter and movement.[139]

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[137] Quamvis autem subiectum huius scientiae sit ens commune, dicitur tamen tota de his quae sunt separata a materia secundum esse et rationem. *In Met.*, Prooem.

[138] Cf. *ibid.*

[139] Philosophia prima est specialis scientia, quamvis consideret ens secundum quod est omnibus commune, quia specialem rationem entis considerat secundum quod

In the light of what has been said concerning the specification of the speculative sciences in the concrete conditions of man's psychology and material environment, this sense of being as the proper subject of metaphysics emerges. The reason for the existence of metaphysics is found in the human intellect's connatural need for a consideration of being as the fundamentally intelligible aspect of the real, the consideration of which leads to the first cause, whose proper effect is being.[140] Only thus is scientific knowledge of all reality attained. But it is through the proper subject, being, as connatural to the human intellect in its origins and intrinsic content as subject, that this total extension of metaphysics as perfective of man must be understood.

From what has been said concerning separation, it is apparent that as a specific scientific consideration, it is the consideration of that which is known as existing without matter and movement. Being, separated precisively, bespeaks a negative judgment as to its dependence upon matter and movement. In this, its negative aspect, this subject suggests the connaturality of its emergence as a scientific subject within the genesis of man's intellectual development. In the attainment of being as its subject, the consideration of metaphysics is a realization that *to be* is not necessarily *to be material and changeable*. Thus the concrete conditions in which man can reach this phase of his intellectual development are emphasized. While the awareness of suprasensible realities is obviously given in the historical and especially in the Christian environment of man, the negative aspect of being in common as precisively separated, implies the simple and universally verifiable occasions for the origin of metaphysics as human science. It implies that such occasions are found in that phase of man's scientific endeavor which is directed towards the material and mobile. St. Thomas, in justifying a third sort of speculative

non dependet a materia et motu. III *Sent.*, d. 27, a. 2, a. 4, sol. 2; cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1, ad 6; *In Met. VI*, lect. 1, n. 1147; XI, lect. 7, nn. 2247-2248.

[140] Ens commune est proprius effectus causae altissimae, scilicet Dei. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 66, a. 5, ad 4.

science apart from those concerned with material reality as such, does so from the fact that there are realities which are separated from matter. It is important to note that being as precisively separated bespeaks the connatural discovery of such realities, which provides an occasion for the origin of metaphysics within the irreducible framework of man's intellect and material reality.

Thus within natural philosophy, whose proper consideration is abstraction, there is the discovery of a first mover, as term of the science. Of such a term only a negative knowledge, that it is not like the material things which depend upon it for movement, is acquired.[141] Especially in that part of the philosophy of nature which is concerned with living things, are there discoveries significant for the beginning of metaphysics, the discoveries, namely, of the human soul and its intellective faculties, as independent of matter.[142] St. Thomas gives as a reason for the appropriateness of the name "metaphysics" the fact that man comes to a knowledge of the suprasensible through the sensible;[143] he notes also that it is the ultimate term of all the sciences as they seek to resolve all reality into its principles.[144] Being precisively separated in its negative connotation suggests the connatural occasions for the negative judgment which actually apprehends being as not necessarily coextensive with material being, since there are beings which exist, and are not material. Since such occasions are truths established scientifically within the philosophy of nature, the separated character of being as the subject of metaphysics is not something presupposed or accepted on grounds which either transcend, or are inferior to, the scientific quest of the human

[141] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 2, obj. 3 and ad 3.

[142] Cf. *In I De Anima*, lect. 1, n. 7: Cognitio de anima videtur multum proficere ad omnem veritatem quae traditur in aliis scientiis. Ad omnes enim partes philosophiae insignes dat occasiones. Quia si ad philosophiam primam attendamus, non possumus devenire in cognitionem divinarum et altissimarum causarum nisi per ea quae ex virtute intellectus possibilis acquirimus. Si enim natura intellectus possibilis esset nobis ignota, non possumus scire ordinem substantiarum separatarum. Cf. *ibid.*, nn. 23-30; III, lect. 7.

[143] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1.

[144] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 6, a. 1.

intellect. In a word, the consideration which is proper to metaphysics is seen through the character of its subject as occasioned by the connatural discovery that there are realities separated from matter and movement.

The negative aspect of being, precisively separated, is also of some moment for an appreciation of the proper nature of the human intellect which considers such a subject. By the attainment of this subject, the intellect in its search for perfection reaches a point of ultimate transcendence over matter and contingency in understanding what reality is. Negatively, this is the understanding that to be is not necessarily to be material and changeable. The occasion for such a realization is the discovery that there are beings, existent things, that exist, and are not material. This discovery is, on the one hand, acquired from the investigation of realities proportioned to the human intellect, material things and the human soul, which while immaterial in itself is yet united to a material body. On the other hand, there must be some such realization that there are things that are, and yet are not material, before it can occur to man to make the judgment of separation that being is precisively separated. This is what underlies St. Thomas' remark that if there were no immaterial realities, natural philosophy would be the supreme science. In the explanation of the constitution and properties of material things, all would be explained.[145] He remarks that, in the history of philosophy, the earlier philosophers who sought to explain all reality contented themselves with the explanation of beings as material.[146] The negative aspect of the proper subject of metaphysics, itself implies the necessary realization that being transcends the material order; it does so, however, in terms of the proper character of the human intellect in its confrontation of the material world. The precisively separated subject of metaphysics expresses the realization that being is verified of both the material and the immaterial; it indicates a universality and

[145] Cf. *In VI Met.*, lect. 1, n. 1170.
[146] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 44, a. 2.

transcendence in the consideration of metaphysics proportioned to the character and natural discovery of man's intellect.

The character of metaphysics' consideration of its subject is to be viewed in terms of the positive content of that subject. From its origins, being as precisively separated is attained as the basic value of the real, even of material things, in which it is verified, yet from which it is separable. With reference to the intellect's attainment of reality St. Thomas notes that to understand anything, to attain its nature, is to attain it in terms of its actuality.[147] This statement is made directly in connection with the term " abstraction." It is true, however, also of being in common as this specifies a consideration which is separation. For this latter is the apprehension of the subject of the science. By the nature of the human intellect, the result of the judgment of separation is expressed in the concept of being in common, precisively separated. As such this subject is the expression of the nature of things as they are being. Thus it is according to that actuality according to which they are constituted in their nature as beings that all things are contained in the concept " being in common " as this is the subject of metaphysics. That which is formally accented in this subject, then, is the act by which all things are, *esse*.[148] This is what is distinctive of metaphysics, conferring upon it its primacy and universality.

> He [Aristotle] says, moreover, " according as it is being," because the other sciences, which are concerned with particular beings, consider being, to be sure, since all the subjects of sciences are beings; they do not, however, consider being as it is being, but as it is this sort of being.[149]

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[147] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 3: Cum enim unaquaeque res sit intelligibilis. . . . Above, note 125.

[148] Cf. *I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 2, a. 2: Esse est actus existentis inquantum est ens.; *Quodl.*, IX, a. 3: Esse dicitur actus entis, in quantum est ens; idest quo denominatur aliquid ens actu in rerum natura.; *In XII Met.*, lect. 7, n. 2419: Ens dicitur quasi esse habens.

[149] Dicit autem (Aristoteles) " secundum quod est ens " quia scientiae aliae, quae sunt de entibus particularibus considerant quidem de ente. cum omnia subiecta scientiarum sunt entia, non tamen considerant ens secundum quod est ens, sed secundum quod est huiusmodi ens. *In IV Met.*, lect. 1, n. 530; cf. VI, lect. 1, nn. 1147-1148; XII, lect. 7, n. 2247.

By reason of its precisively separated character, the subject of metaphysics induces the realization that *to be* and *to be material* are not synonymous. Consequently, and positively, a being is a being not because it is material, not in terms of its principles as changeable being, but in terms of being, insofar as it is "that which has being." As it considers reality under this aspect, then, metaphysics considers "being as being"; the content of the subject of the science is "having being" (*habens esse*). While not a definition, since there is nothing prior to being to manifest it, being in common as formally and explicitly expressing "having being" is understood as expressing the basic reality of the real. The judgment of separation attaining it, results in this notion in which the "form signified by the name,"[150] is the actuality of all acts, *esse*, the actuality by reason of which all beings are beings, and are intelligible as such.

The implications of what is positively gained by the attainment of the subject of metaphysics are many. First of all, this subject is expressed not abstractly, but concretely; in other words, the formal aspect which is emphasized in the subject is expressed in a concrete term.[151] A simple reason for this is the nature of the intellect and its area of competence. This subject of metaphysics is derived from a judgment concerning existents, concrete subjects exercising the act of existence. The connatural way of understanding for man is here involved. The things that man knows primarily and properly are not separated forms, but subjects actualized by their forms. Even abstract terms, such as *humanity*, express formalities by which things in matter are constituted in their nature; while concrete terms express subjects with the actuality which makes them what they are.[152] The result of the judgment of separation, exercised concerning actual realities, is expressed in a term to

[150] Cf. *I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 4.

[151] For various senses of the term *ens*, cf. *II Sent.*, d. 34, q. 1, a. 1; *De Ente et Essentia*, c. 1. The discussion in detail of the senses of the term is part of the initial investigation of metaphysics; they need not be considered here.

[152] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 13, a. 1, ad 2.

signify such realities formally as they are beings; it is thus expressed in a concrete term. But again, it is being insofar as it is being that is the formal note in this term; the accent is upon the actuality of beings as beings that the judgment of separation attains. The name " being in common " is imposed from this actuality.

Secondly, in regard to the concreteness of the term *being*, its derivation manifests that the subject of metaphysics is not solely existence, *esse*. This act is not attained by the human intellect as isolated, subsistent. Beings, existents, under the formal aspect that they are beings, are attained through the realization that beings are not constituted as such by matter. To attain being insofar as it is being, implies that the accent in this term is upon this actuality, *esse*; but not that the act of existence itself is the subject of metaphysics. That there is such a reality as a subsistent act of existing is a truth that could not dawn upon the metaphysician in the connatural beginning of the science, in the apprehension of its subject. Even when such a truth is attained, it is attained as a conclusion, as a proposition necessarily true; the act of subsistent existence itself is never attained by the sheer power of the human intellect.[153]

Certainly in its consideration of its proper subject metaphysics must investigate both " essence " and " existence." Certain points need to be realized, however, concerning this investigation. The term " being " as a concrete term is one which expresses a subject with the act by which it is what it is. Thus in this concrete term essence can be understood as the subject, that whose act is to be.[154] Essence as such can also be considered with the act of being (*esse*) as a kind of principle by which a thing is a being. " Essence under the formality of essence is not the principle of the act which is operation, but

[153] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 3, a. 4, ad 2.

[154] Cf. *I Sent.*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 1: Essentia dicitur cuius actus est esse. Essence is in this sense understood concretely and as whole, signifying that which is, not as a part, with precision from other elements non-constitutive of a common nature. Cf. *ibid.*

of the act which is to be." [155] St. Thomas speaks of it as quasi-constitutive of this act, determining it as its subject, since "to be is a kind of common thing and does not bespeak any determined mode of being." [156]

On the other hand, the act of being (*esse*), as the actuality of all that is, most formal of all formalities, is that by which things are denominated beings; it is the definitive note in the term "being" as the subject of metaphysics.[157]

Both "essence" and "existence," then, pertain to metaphysics' consideration of its subject; the investigation of both simply as manifestive of the content of this subject is necessary from the outset of the science.[158] Neither, however, is itself the subject of metaphysics, since neither is a "complete nature in itself," but is attained only and formally in the science of the subject, being in common.

Finally, with regard to the consideration of the subject of metaphysics, it is to be noted that this attainment of being as subject is at the opposite pole from the initial apprehension of being by the human intellect. Being is the first known because it is the ultimate root of intelligibility; whatever can be, can be

[155] Essentia sub ratione essentiae non dicat principium actus qui est operatio, sed qui est esse. *Ibid.*, d. 5, q. 1, a. 3.

[156] Esse commune quoddam est et non determinat aliquem modum essendi. *Ibid.*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 1; cf. *II*, d. 1, q. a. 4. Cf. also: *In IV Met.*, lect. 2, n. 558: Esse enim rei quamvis sit aliud ab eius essentia non tamen est intelligendum quod est aliquid superadditum ad modum accidentis sed quasi constituitur per principia essentiae; *I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3: Sicut esse secundum rationem intelligendi consequitur principia ipsius entis quasi causas.

[157] Cf. *ibid.*, *I*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 1: Esse enim est actus alicuius ut quod est . . . et est actus alicuius ut quo est, scilicet quo denominatur esse.

[158] Contrary to the statement of Fr. Klubertanz, the judgment of separation at the beginning of metaphysics is not the perception of the real distinction between *esse* and essence. St. Thomas' statements concerning "separation" in the *De Trinitate* do not refer to the separability of *esse* from material essence. The real distinction does not mean of course *separability* of essence and *esse*, so that one can be without the other. The judgment of separation as understood by St. Thomas does mean that one thing can be without another. Furthermore, most important to the development of metaphysics is the truth that the real distinction can be attained only as a conclusion, discovered and demonstrated after an extensive investigation of the beings of experience, under the light of metaphysics' proper principles.

understood; a thing is intelligible insofar as it is in act. But being as first known is not known according to the fulness of its value; it is not fully known as " being insofar as it is being." In the initial apprehension, it is attained rather as a kind of supreme universal; it is the most indeterminate of concepts, containing the proper characteristics of things potentially, as parts in a universal whole. The reason that it is first known is the nature of the intellect as ordained to the intelligible; the reason for the imperfection of this knowledge is again the nature of the intellect as human, proceeding from what is most common to what is proper in things, from imperfection to perfection.[159]

Metaphysics' attainment of its subject, as the result of the judgment of separation, is, conversely, a proper knowledge, an explicit knowledge of being insofar as it is being, according to that ultimate actuality by which whatever is, is denominated *being*. The apprehension of the subject of science is the apprehension of that subject according to its distinctively intelligible formality. Being as being, the subject of metaphysics, is so apprehended in virtue of the separation proper to metaphysics. For, in terms connatural to the human origins of metaphysics, this separation means the realization that *being as being* is an expression of the ultimately perfective note of the real, more profound than, and not explained by, the material constitution of being as material and mobile. Although this subject at the beginning of metaphysics is not totally explained by any means, nor its intelligibility exhausted, it is apprehended formally as the expression of the fundamental value of the real. It is the expression of that which is perfective, and which is verified of all reality. Thus it is at the opposite pole from being, the first known, abstracted as a potential, universal whole. The subject of metaphysics is the final key to the fulfillment of the capacity of the human intellect.[160]

[159] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 3.

[160] Cf. *ibid.*, I, q. 5, a. 1: Esse est actualitas omnis rei. *De Pot.*, q. 7, a. 2, ad 9: Hoc quod dico esse est actualitas omnium actuum et propter hoc est perfectio omnium perfectionum. Cf. also *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3; q. 8, a. 1; *II Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 4.

b. Metaphysics' consideration of the positively separated, principles of its subject.

The goal of metaphysics in the abstract, as it were, is the exhaustion of the intelligibility of the real as attainable by man; concretely its end, then, is the attainment of God, the first cause of all that is. The principle of limitation, insisting that the proper subject of metaphysics can only be the precisively separated, being in common, does not preclude metaphysics' attainment of the positively separated, God; rather it guarantees it in terms of the natural perfectibility of the human intellect. In virtue of this proper subject, metaphysics does attain to the one sort of scientific knowledge of God valid in terms of the natural powers of man's intellect, namely, the knowledge of God as principle of that subject of metaphysics. This truth is to be seen in terms of the proper subject as precisively separated.

The fundamental restrictive norm placed upon the intellect's consideration of things *abstractly* is that it may not omit that which is constitutive of what it considers, and upon which the thing considered is dependent in its entitative constitution. For this reason the separation proper to metaphysics' consideration is valid only concerning those things which are separated at least precisively from matter. Being in common is separable in this way. Through the judgment of separation there is the realization that to be does not necessarily mean to be material; that being is a value of the real, absolved completely from essential dependence upon matter. In other words, the subject of metaphysics is " defined " without matter in any way; it is neither included nor excluded. As the attainment of such a subject, the consideration of metaphysics is the realization of the validity of this subject to express not only material reality as real, but also anything else that *is*. Whatever the science attains, it attains by reason of its proper subject; whatever enters the science does so by reason of this subject; whatever the diversity of things in themselves may be, provided they

are attained according to the mode of the subject, they pertain to the one science.[161] Thus, again:

> First philosophy is a special science even though it considers being according as it is common to all things, because it considers the special aspect of being according as it does not depend upon matter and movement.[162]

This transcendence over matter proper to the subject of metaphysics thus gives its consideration, separation, a limitless, univeral extension. For metaphysics can and does consider matter, movement, and other material realities, but all insofar as they are being.[163] Metaphysics can also and does extend to the consideration of the divine, in terms of its proper subject, being in common. For the fact that being in common transcends the material, even though only precisively, permits it to be the vehicle for expressing valid truths, gained through the discovered aspects of its own dependence, concerning the existence of and the attributes necessary to the positively separated as principle of this subject.

To express the case more positively, God is attained as principle of the subject of metaphysics, being in common, precisively separated. The knowledge about God is formally and exclusively knowledge about the principle of being in common. That knowledge is valid; it expresses something about the reality of the first cause; the first cause is known as *absolutely* first—all because the subject of metaphysics is known as immaterial, separated, as an absolute value of the real, not limited to material reality. When this subject leads to the discovery of the first cause and even to the necessity of affirming the supereminence of that cause,[164] these truths are not beyond the capacity of metaphysics, or devoid of meaning, because they are intelligible in terms of being in common.

[161] Cf. *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 41, nn. 10-12; *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2; a. 3; a. 7.

[162] Cf. above, note 139.

[163] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 4, ad 6; *In II Phys.*, lect. 5, n. 1; *In VI Met.*, lect. 1, n. 1165.

[164] Cf. *De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 4.

St. Thomas states what is involved in two brief passages, already cited:

God is not known to us except through phantasms, not of Him, but of the thing of which He is the cause and through which we reach Him.

Just as God is not an existent in the way that these things are existents, but rather the nature of entity is in Him eminently, in such a way that He is not entirely outside entity; so also is He not entirely outside knowledge so that He cannot be known, but He is not known as other existents, which can be comprehended by a created intellect, are known.[165]

At the beginning of metaphysics the content of the subject sufficient for its leading role in the process of discovery, and for the fulfillment of the purpose of the science, yields the attainment of being as the fundamental value or aspect of the real. This attainment of being is not in terms of matter or form, but in terms of "having being" as valid for any reality, material or immaterial. There is consequently the realization of the capability of this subject to lead to an absolute explanation of all reality. But the fulfillment of this capability consists in the total process of the science itself. There is in the beginning no realization of all the modifications necessarily to be attributed to this subject, by reason of the concrete fulfillment of its implications in the *beings* of man's experience, as they are beings. Much less is there any scientific realization of a Being whose nature is "to be." But because the subject is apprehended as the expression of the reality of the real, as an expression of perfection transcending the material order, then it is sufficient to lead to a knowledge of even the first cause of all being, who is not

[165] Ad quintum dicendum quod. . . . Deus non cognoscitur a nobis nisi per phantasmata non sui ipsius, sed causati sui per quod in ipsum devenimus. I *Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, ad 5.

Ad primum ergo dicendum quod sicut Deus non est hoc modo existens sicut ista existentia, sed in eo est natura entitatis eminenter unde non est omnino expers entitatis, ita etiam non omnino est expers cognitionis quin cognoscatur; sed non cognoscitur per modum aliorum existentium quae intellectu creato comprehendi possunt. *Ibid.*

" outside entity " and so not outside of intelligibility for the metaphysician. Deficient as this knowledge must be, not attaining the proper being of the first cause as a " complete nature in itself " and as subject, but only as principle of the subject of metaphysics, yet it will be valid knowledge, expressive of certain absolute and positive aspects of this first cause, through the value of " being in common." It is the only knowledge of the positively separated that is so valid, in terms of the native powers of the human intellect.[166]

II. Comparison with " Principles " of Certain Thomistic Authors

The immediately obvious comparison arising from the examination of St. Thomas' principle of limitation, is between his principle and a position which includes God explicitly as part of the subject of metaphysics. There is, however, another less explicit tendency which is also noteworthy in the light of this principle of limitation. A brief comparison with both lines of thought is important, since the position with regard to God's place in metaphysics governs any approach to the question of His existence.

A. Comparison with the Position Explicitly Considering God as the Subject of Metaphysics

The work of Fr. Gredt is representative of the direct and explicit position that God is included in the subject of metaphysics. While repeating St. Thomas' statement that " being in common " is the subject of the science, he interprets this as meaning being immaterial both precisively and positively, being with a community that extends to both created and uncreated being, or, rather, that abstracts from these. From what has been said concerning the principle of limitation, however, it is apparent that the subject of metaphysics cannot have a commonness abstracting from created and uncreated. Thus there can be no general metaphysics concerned with this sub-

[166] Cf. Deandrea, *op. cit.*, 195-196; " Soggetto e oggetto della Metafisica secondo S. Tomasso," *Angelicum*, 27 (1950), fasc. 2, 166-192.

ject, and then a special metaphysics concerned with created being and uncreated being. The subject of metaphysics cannot be so all-embracing for the simple reason that the subject of the science is the key to the discoveries of the science, and in metaphysics God is attained solely as principle of the subject insofar as He is reached as the first cause of all being at the term of the scientific process. Of its nature, intrinsically, as an unfolding of the acquisitive perfectibility of the human intellect, metaphysics has no knowledge of God at its beginnings. It begins with the apprehension of its proper subject, being in common, through the judgment of separation. That there is being which is created, and a Being who is uncreated—these are conclusions reached much later in the process of discovery. It is one thing to say that metaphysics considers God, but it is quite a different thing to say that God is included in metaphysics as subject, a distinction of which St. Thomas takes note in both the Prooemium to the *Metaphysics* and in the *De Trinitate*. To neglect the difference is to assume knowledge which is either theological or which belongs to metaphysics' order of judgment, presupposing the completed process of the science.

This position, arising from a zeal to give metaphysics its full amplitude, and probably from an eagerness, understandable in its historical setting, to show how reason attains the natural truths of religion, ignores St. Thomas' teaching that the subject of the science is that whose definition is the key to all the discoveries of the science. In stating that the subject of metaphysics abstracts from created and uncreated, that metaphysics is accordingly divided into general and special parts, this position actually must employ truths which can be attained in metaphysics only as conclusions. Such conclusions cannot be presupposed in designating the subject, the key to all the conclusions of the science. Even the truth that being is caused is a conclusion, gained from an investigation of beings as beings in terms of the subject of the science. That being is either created or uncreated is an even more remote discovery of metaphysics. Only in the sense that it says nothing about

these can being in common be said to abstract from created and uncreated. The position involved, however, evidently does not intend this, for the division of being is the basis for the division of metaphysics adopted, even as it had been in authors such as Suarez, Wolff, and the nineteenth-century scholastics. In terms then of the role of the subject of science as the key to discovery, there is good reason why St. Thomas indicates that the subject of metaphysics is not the positively separated, but the precisively separated. This is not the same as the position represented by Fr. Gredt's notion and division of metaphysics. The latter would indeed seem to frustrate the process of discovery typical of science; it would make of metaphysics a mere display of divisions and theses proposing to prove what is already given and accepted from the outset, after the style of Christian Wolff.

Such an understanding of the subject of metaphysics is not necessary to assure the science's fulfilling its role; being in common precisively separated has been seen to be adequate for this task. In the light of the principle of limitation, no "higher" sense of the subject of metaphysics is indeed warranted. Through this subject as proposed by St. Thomas, metaphysics is distinct as superior from all inferior sciences; there can be no higher speculative science that is purely rational and that deals with the positively separated, with uncreated being, as its subject.

The mentality that seems to be involved in making the subject of metaphysics to include God, by reason of its "immateriality," has a certain similarity to an error defending the power of the intellect to know the quiddity of the positively immaterial, by a kind of progressive process of abstracting. St. Thomas rejects this error on the same basis which constantly guides him in indicating the limitations of the human intellect.[167] The position that God is included in the subject of metaphysics would seem to conceive of being as so produced by a process of abstracting that it could embrace God. But in

[167] Cf. *Q. D. de Anima*, a. 16; also III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 45; *Summa Theol.*, I, q 88, a. 2.

truth the subject of metaphysics is not the product of a purely mental exercise protracted until the equivalent of some presupposition such as God's pure immateriality is reached. Rather the subject is derived from the order proper to man and his scientific experience at the point of metaphysics' inception. Being is apprehended as separable; this is the highest the intellect can reach in attaining things as subject of speculative science. That subject does eventually lead to the truth that there is a being utterly transcending the order which man can properly know. But it is because of the proper subject that such a truth is derived. Through aspects of imperfection in beings of experience, discovered in the light of the perfective note of being as being, precisively separated, metaphysics reaches the realization of the necessary dependence of its subject upon God as a principle, positively immaterial, most actual, excelling all effects, eminently intelligible.[186] Even the truth of its own inability to consider this principle as subject is attained by metaphysics; whatever is attained, however, is attained by reason of a proper subject, being in common, which is proportioned to the capacity and needs of the human intellect, in its genesis and content as scientific subject.

B. Comparison with the Position Implicitly Considering God as the Subject of Metaphysics

The position of Etienne Gilson and his followers among contemporary Thomists is radically opposed to the principle of limitation as it has been here examined. For instead of insisting upon the nature of metaphysics in accord with the nature of the human intellect, Gilson emphasizes the theme of the historical fact of revelation's contribution to the metaphysical thought of St. Thomas, especially in regard to the primacy of existence (esse) in that thought. What this eminent scholar admirably demonstrates historically is a valuable contribution to students of St. Thomas. There is no desire to detract from the historical conclusion, especially since the base sublimis

[186] Cf. ibid.

veritas reflects in the *Contra Gentes* St. Thomas' own acknowledgement of the light shed by the revelation of God's name in Exodus upon the basic truth concerning God and His creation. The Angelic Doctor, the supreme theologian, attests to this upon theological grounds also, calling attention to the need man has for grace even to achieve the fulness of his natural intellectual perfection.[169]

M. Gilson, however, is not simply a historian but a philosopher as well. His historical thesis concerning Thomism governs his interpretation of the nature of philosophy, especially of Thomistic philosophy. Thus, to show the primacy of existence as realized by St. Thomas through the assistance of revelation, he notes that when left to himself, St. Thomas defines metaphysics as the science of *Being as Being,* not of being as being. As a definition of metaphysics from its final cause, this notion would be perhaps acceptable. But from the lines along which this author suggests the development of a truly Thomistic metaphysics, it is apparent that he intends to indicate that God is the proper subject of such a metaphysics. This is in complete opposition to St. Thomas' thought.

The very text used here as the focal point for setting out the principle of limitation is from a work devoted to the heights of sacred theology, the commentary on Boethius' *De Trinitate.* Yet in it St. Thomas sees fit to state the nature of metaphysics, carefully delineating the restricted sense in which it can consider God. To insist, then, upon the nature of metaphysics as a human science, to be developed and grasped according to the natural capacity of the human intellect; to insist that the subject, consequently, can only be one proportioned to that intellect; to assign as the science's attainment of God solely the consideration of Him as the principle of the subject, discoverable through the investigation of this subject —this is not to formulate a philosophy *ad mentem Cartesii.* Most certainly it is to describe a metaphysics *ad mentem Divi Thomae,* and this through his own words and basic philosophical doctrines.

[169] Cf. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 1, a. 1; I-II, q. 109, a. 1.

While agreement and admiration may be expected as a response to the eminent historian's insights into the primacy of *esse* in St. Thomas' metaphysical thought, the impression that the *de facto* assistance of revelation should dicate the inversion of the process of metaphysics is regrettable.[170] That such an impression is created is attested by a representation of Thomism with M. Gilson as its spokesman, as a system which begins with the presupposition that God exists. It is witnessed as well in the approach to the question of God's existence in his own works and in those of his followers, since the conception of the nature of metaphysics necessarily governs the approach to the question of God's existence.

On the general attitude of Gilson, which is all that is at stake here, it is to be said that he would identify the intrinsic constitution of metaphysics with its historical, effective development. Certainly this latter assisted in the development of Thomistic metaphysics, as this is taken to mean the metaphysical thought of St. Thomas, both as regards the intellectual activity involved and as regards the discernment and evaluation of truths which do lie within the competence of human reason. In other words, the assistance of revelation directed the intellect, confirmed it, and thus guaranteed that metaphysics should contain and attain the truths proper to it. But

[170] In the attempts of certain followers of Gilson to apply his positions to philosophical developments, there are obvious difficulties. Fr. Owens, for example, seems to take the exaggerated position that the subject of metaphysics is the act of existence, common to God and creatures. The attempt to emphasize the so-called "existential" aspect of St. Thomas' metaphysics seems to lead into the neglect of what is in the same article so carefully declared, namely, that the judgment of separation is exercised upon actual, sensible existents. But such a judgment can only attain and express things as they are, subjects exercising the act of existing. Nowhere is the act of existence itself isolated. Metaphysics is concerned with things; the things which man confronts are "having being," subjects with the actuality of existing. Known formally, as beings, it is they that are expressed in the term *being,* whose denominative note is the actuality by which they are beings. Because at the point of metaphysics' inception there has been the discovery of beings which are not material, the term which expresses the subject of metaphysics is apprehended in all its value as an expression valid for whatever has being, material or immaterial being.

it is to be observed that this is simply an example of grace as perfective of nature; nature is so perfected by being made true to itself. In the concrete conditions of human existence, which, to be sure, can be properly evaluated only through revelation, such a confirmation and guarantee are necessary. The fruits of the divorce between faith and reason in modern philosophy, as well as the philosophically unwarranted inclusion of God in such systems as those of Descartes, Locke, Kant, are sufficient signs of this truth. Yet St. Thomas did take the trouble to show what metaphysics is in its proper nature and what the natural proportion of man's intellect to truth about God is, precisely because he wished to guarantee that man who had received the assistance and elevation of grace, would remember that he is man; that, in particular, metaphysics is divine science in a very restricted sense. St. Thomas' interest as theologian was to attribute to metaphysics all that it has a right to by its own nature; but to deny to it the privilege of walking familiarly with God as its proper subject. He wished to show how metaphysics could serve its highest purpose, namely, by remaining true to itself. Not because he was jealous of the dignity of metaphysics or of reason's autonomy was St. Thomas so strictly conservative concerning metaphysics' consideration of God, but because he was primarily concerned with the dignity of sacred theology, which as a " kind of impression of the divine science itself," [171] alone has God as its proper subject. He did, then, carefully show how metaphysics in terms of its intrinsic constitution can attain its proper end, and thus as science merit its dignity and its title as divine science. Thus true to itself, metaphysics is the more perfectly adaptable to the extrinsic end it has as it is employed by sacred doctrine.[172]

For St. Thomas, then, metaphysics is not the science of *Being as Being;* it is the human science which considers being in common, separated precisively, as its proper subject; which

[171] Certain clarifications on the matter of Christian Philosophy, as presented by M. Gilson, can be profitably drawn from J. Maritain, *De la Philosophie Chrétienne* (Paris: Desclée, 1933), especially pp. 39-47; 60-69; 150-151.

[172] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2; a. 6 ad 2.

consequently attains God solely and exclusively as principle of this subject. Any philosophical development concerning these points can never change this teaching and continue to represent itself as the metaphysical thought of St. Thomas.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Epistemology. By Louis-Marie Régis, O.P. Translated by Imelda Choquette Byrne. New York: Macmillan (Christian Wisdom Series), 1959. Pp. 549 with index. $6.50.

In 1946 when Fr. Régis delivered his brilliant Aquinas Lecture in Milwaukee on *St. Thomas and Epistemology,* it was the expressed hope of many that he would some day give to the world a definitive work on Thomistic epistemology. What he has in fact given us in this volume is a magnificent, clear, orderly, genuinely Thomistic textbook on certain aspects of epistemology. The exigencies of a textbook necessarily curb the originality of an author, while at the same time test his pedagogical ingenuity. Fr. Régis has shown himself to be an exemplary pedagogue. Carefully ordered questions, clearly divided expositions and frequent summary of conclusions are indispensable aids to teaching which Fr. Régis has fully exploited.

The work is divided into four parts: The epistemological problem; What does it mean to know?; What does it mean to know truth?; What is the knowledge of infallible truth?

In the first part the author discusses the meaning of problem in general before tŏuching the epistemological problem. A problem is born when two storytellers tell different stories about the same fact or the same universe (p. 8). This begets the psychological shock involving fear, and wonder which stimulates investigation and discovery. The writings of Descartes, Kant and certain idealist Neo-Scholastics are then examined to identify the two storytellers who have created the modern epistemological problem. For Descartes the conflict lies between the infallible certainty of mathematics and the falsity of common sense and Scholastic philosophy. For Kant it lies between the infallible certainty of Newtonian physics and the lack of evidence for metaphysical knowledge. For some Neo-Scholastics it lies between the desirability of Thomistic realism and the enviable prestige of critical idealism. Fr. Régis' criticism of all idealism, particularly Neo-Scholastic, is as devastating in this volume as it has been in his previous publications. In his view the source of the nightmare in modern Thomistic circles is the failure to ask the right questions in the right order.

According to Fr. Régis the epistemological problem for St. Thomas lies in the conflicting stories told by Augustinian illuminism and Aristotelian realism. The Thomistic *mirabile* "is primarily concerned wth the conflict between the Aristotelian and Platonic *methods*" (p. 121). Platonism begins with God and eternal ideas, mutilates man by transforming him into

a spirit, and ends hopelessly in a metaphorical explanation of sensible reality; Aristotelianism begins with the reality of the sensible universe, sees man as a hylemorphic unity of body and soul, and ends with the discovery of God who is the Thought of thoughts. Fr. Régis, therefore, formulates the Thomistic epistemological problem: "What is the principle whose presence enables Aristotelianism successfully to explain the universe and whose absence sterilizes Platonism and transforms it into a mythology of the physical universe" (p. 124)? To answer this question Fr. Régis first assumes the existence of knowledge as a fact of experience, second asks the nature of this knowledge, third seeks to explain the characteristic property of this knowledge, namely, truth or falsity, and fourth determines why some truths are absolutely certain, some relatively certain, and others only probable. With this last question the cycle of epistemological questions is considered complete. For Fr. Régis, the solution rests in a plurality of knowledge in every human being and in an intimate dependence of intellectual concepts on the phantasm.

In the second part of the book the first of these "epistemological" questions is answered by a clear exposition of St. Thomas' explanation of human knowledge from its beginnings in sense to its elaboration in the final concept of being as being. The role of the agent intellect and the nature of intentional species are beautifully explained, thus establishing the realism of Thomistic psychology.

In the third part the logical and psychological structure of judgment is discussed in two chapters. The unique psychological character of judgment is brought out clearly; the peculiar specification of the enunciation by *ipsum esse rei* is accurately explained (pp. 328-336), contrary to the misplaced existentialism of certain modern Thomists; and the unique character of logical truth is adequately explained.

The fourth part examines the infallible necessity of the absolutely first principles of human reason, and discusses briefly the dependence of scientific first principles on the principle of identity. In a surprisingly brief conclusion of nine pages the methodology of science (natural philosophy and mathematics) is contrasted to that of wisdom.

The author fully acknowledges that epistemology must belong to metaphysics (pp. 465, 467, 474-6); it is in fact the defensive role of wisdom to safeguard not only its own first principles as the highest human science, but also the first principles of the other human sciences. This primary function of epistemology is not brought out in this volume. "To know that man is a creature gives Thomistic epistemology its metaphysical context; but this context is not sufficient, for man is a particular creature and his imitation of God depends upon his own nature, since nature determines *esse*. . . . The immediate context of Thomistic epistemology is thus a *philosophy of nature*" (p. 143). Can a treatise, even a brilliant one, on

human psychology and logic justify the title of *Epistemology* merely by considering man a creature?

The problem of how singulars of sense experience become the object of intellectual knowledge, or how "that which was not intelligible becomes intelligible" (p. 224) is a problem of psychology. It may even be considered the central problem of psychology. Nevertheless, the proper principles of psychology are adequate to solve it. This may become a problem for metaphysics only when,—the agent intellect being denied— (i) the actually intelligible is made to exist apart from matter, as for Plato; (ii) the actually intelligible is derived through divine illumination, as in Augustinianism; (iii) the actually intelligible is made innate in whole or in part, as for Descartes and Kant; or (iv) when the actually intelligible is reduced to mere words, as in Nominalism. In this context the refutation of Platonic exemplarism, Augustinian illuminism, idealistic innatism and current Nominalism belongs to metaphysics in its defensive role. This, of course, is the celebrated metaphysical (not the logical or psychological) problem of universals. The metaphysical refutation of such erroneous views is indeed difficult. Aristotle showed why the sensible species could not exist apart from matter, but did he sufficiently stabilize the objective, eternal, necessary character of physical species? St. Thomas demonstrated beyond all doubt that the human intellect is and must be sufficient to know natural truths. Fr. Régis has delivered the death blow to Cartesianism, Kantianism and Idealist Neo-Scholasticism, but is this sufficient for a Thomistic epistemology? The metaphysician must also defend the possibility of his own science against Nominalism. Throughout the book there is no attempt to show *why* there must be a science of metaphysics.

While the epistemologist should be concerned with the existence of universals and his own science of metaphysics, he could be more profitably concerned today with the possibility of scientific knowledge. The scientific character of natural philosophy, for example, cannot be defended by the naturalist—all he can do is point to experience as Aristotle did in Book II of the *Physics*. Neither can the possibility of scientific learning be defended by the logician—all he can do is take the fact of experience as Aristotle did in *Post. Anal.*, I. c. 1. It belongs to the metaphysician to defend and justify the proper object of the lower sciences; it belongs to him to defend the *epistemic* character of these sciences. Today more than ever the validity of a true science (*epistéme*) of nature needs to be defended against the encroachment of the mathematical-physical sciences. The evaluation of modern mathematical-physics should also be the concern of a Thomistic epistemologist.

A reviewer ought not to emphasize what is missing from a book, but these things are pointed out in the ardent hope that we can still expect from Fr. Régis a definitive work on Thomistic epistemology, a work which will not be designed as a textbook.

It is unfortunate that no attention was given to the etymologies of English words discussed, particularly of Anglo-Saxon words. It would have proved helpful for the student and illuminating to teachers. The English word "wonder," for example, from the Anglo-Saxon *wundor*, carries much more of the philosophical sense of puzzlement than *admiratio*, particularly in its verbal form as in "I wonder what is happening." Similarly the English words "truth" and "true" come from the Anglo-Saxon *trēowe*, meaning faithful, trusty, and from *trēow*, meaning fidelity, faithful, troth. This good English word conveys the philosophical idea of conformity far better than the root for *alètheia* or for *veritas*.

Finally there are at least two important sentences where the translator succeeded in rendering the exact opposite of what must have been intended by the author: p. 291, lines 4-10, and p. 357, lines 23-27.

Fr. Régis has written a great book and has opened the doors of Thomism wide for English readers. Our sincere hope is that he will open these doors yet wider.

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The Riddle of Roman Catholicism. By DR. JAROSLAV PELIKAN. New York-Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1959. $4.00.

That a Lutheran theologian of Dr. Pelikan's stature essays at this time a professedly objective and comprehensive critique of the Catholic Church —her life, institutions, and theology—marks an epoch in the history of religion in America. The author of this volume is professor of historical theology on the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. The abundant documentation of the various chapters, which are unified by a three-fold approach—historical, analytic, and critical—witnesses to his competence to undertake this task. Therefore, we thank the author for his courage and honesty; and we invite our readers to rejoice with us at the appearance of his important work.

The very fact that the subject *is* so comprehensive constitutes a serious problem for the reviewer. It seems unfeasible, if not impossible, to discuss each element which he treats; although there are almost none that do not evoke reflection (we should cite in particular the following chapters: IV. The Tragic Necessity of the Reformation; VII. The Two Swords [on the problem of Church and State]; VIII. Mystery and Magic [on the sacraments]; and XIII. The Unity We Seek). Since the various reviews of this work will tend to complement one another, it seems better to criticise in particular one chapter that deals with a matter especially

within the purview of *The Thomist;* and then to comment briefly on several other points of paramount interest. The chapter in question is entitled, "The Angelic Doctor," in which Dr. Pelikan confronts the existence of Thomism as a philosophical and theological system in the Church. The secondary points all gravitate, in a greater or lesser degree, toward the question of Christian unity. It is evident that this latter was, fundamentally, the motive which prompted the author to present the fruits of his study.

The first section of the chapter dealing with St. Thomas discusses the origins of his thought. The author sees in the providential appearance of the Angelic Doctor in the Church the answer to a two-fold need, which keeps recurring in the history of Christianity. The first of these is a need, interior to the Church, of a progressive definition of the deposit of faith, for which St. Thomas had at his disposal the entire tradition of thirteen centuries. As a matter of fact, St. Thomas' intention, in writing the *Summa Theologiae,* was to put into the hands of "beginners" an instrument with which they might acquaint themselves with the salient (and sometimes subtle) points of Christian doctrine (cf. *Summa Theol.* I, prol.). In accomplishing this task, as the author points out, St. Thomas uses the Fathers of the Church, the voice of tradition, in various ways. In the vast majority of cases, where the patristic tradition is evidently a unanimous confirmation and penetration of a particular doctrine, St. Thomas can do no better than simply to re-present the tradition. On other rare occasions, where there is an apparent or real disharmony among the Fathers, he must attempt a solution on the basis of the present "state of the question."

One or two remarks seem to be called for in this context. First of all, the author has done well to present the thought of St. Thomas *in the line of tradition.* One element seems, however, to be lacking in his discussion: the primary dependence of St. Thomas upon the authority of the Church, as distinct from patristic authority, *tout court.* The two are undeniably materially co-terminous, again, "in the vast majority of cases"; but one cannot help but think of St. Thomas' pointing out that the authority of a Jerome or an Augustine does not measure up to the authority of a doctrinal decision of the Church. This attitude is confirmed by his frequent recourse to the pronouncements of the Councils and the Roman Pontiffs. A second remark; the author is not extremely judicious in choosing an example of St. Thomas "judging" between two traditions, when he cites the distinction of primary and secondary causes as solving the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius. In this "judgment" St. Thomas is Augustinian to the very limit of his powers. Would it not have been better to have adduced, for example, St. Thomas' discussion of the Eastern and Western manners of designating the unity of Nature and trinity of Persons in God?

The second area of the Church to which St. Thomas gave a timely answer, according to Dr. Pelikan, lies rather beyond the [illegible]. It is in general, the Church's actual position in the world. St. Thomas' major contribution here was his synthesis of faith and reason, which has saved the loss of meaningful truth [illegible] and the type of [illegible] which leaves but a [illegible] with no transsubjective basis for faith.

The following section of this chapter deals with what the author means by the "enthronement" of Thomism in the Church. He traces accurately the early violent opposition to St. Thomas in some quarters, and the continued existence of other theological systems in the Church. Perhaps the choice of the theology of Duns Scotus and William of Ockham as the "best known of these" is misleading in the sense that in neither case is there question of a theological system which evokes the complete allegiance which St. Thomas' doctrine does. Still, it would be foolish to deny that among certain Catholic theologians there is a certain uneasiness with the scholastic method as such. Could this unease be justly interpreted as a form of [illegible]? Everyone seems to agree that modern man is in a position which he attempts to understand the scholastic expression of divine truth. If, however, these expressions are a legitimate development of the "primitive" [illegible] ways of speaking, is it not presumptuous to suppose, prima facie, that they are, in themselves, more incompatible with the modern mind than any other mode of thought?

One statement of this particular [illegible] would seem to be called into question. Speaking of the tensions between the Augustinian definitions of the Council of Trent and the doctrine of St. Thomas, the author asserts: "Although its doctrine of justification differed from that of St. Thomas, the Council of Trent did advance the cause of Thomism by sanctioning the Thomistic method" (p. [illegible]). In the accompanying note he cites the thesis of M. Flick on St. Thomas' doctrine concerning the instant of justification. It seems evident that the reference here [illegible]. The author will pardon this reviewer if it is not accurate as to St. Thomas' assertions (I-II, 113, 7 and parallel places) of the instantaneous character of justification. When compared with the Tridentine texts (Sess. VI, cc. 5 and 6, D. 797-798), this assertion might indeed appear at first glance to have been modified or repudiated. A more careful scrutiny, however, of St. Thomas' own doctrine reveals that this is not the case. The [illegible] on [illegible] in the body of the article cited above, as well as in the answer to the first objection (cf. also I-II, 113, 8, ad 3um, and I-II, 112, 2, ad 2um and ad 3um), is perfect or complete disposition and not imperfect or incomplete disposition for justification. The former is concomitant with the soul's instantaneous transformation from the state of sinfulness to the state of divine adoption, while the latter may precede this event and is subject to temporal succession. The account that the conciliar Fathers give of a gradual progress from

ecumenical dialogue, a symbol of which is the circumstances of St. Thomas' own death. When he passed out of this world he was *on his way* also to the Council of Lyons, a council of union! We should concur heartily with Dr. Pelikan in this sentiment, basing our agreement especially on the fact that St. Thomas' synthesis *predates* the " tragically necessary " Reformation and often states crucial questions in a manner which transcends and throws a superior light on subsequent controversies.

Among the other subjects that merit attention in this volume, we should like to cite, first of all, the author's open expression of his views regarding the place of Mary in theology and the life of the Church. Dr. Pelikan, who represents substantially the position of Luther himself, at least in his later life, sees the role of the Blessed Virgin as one of witness: first, in certifying the true humanity of Christ; second, in being the most outstanding member of that " cloud of witnesses " who have run the race of faith. Here again we believe that a dialogue is possible; and we should want to ask our Protestant brethren who seriously weigh the place of Mary in God's plan if it is *sufficient* (certainly it is legitimate!) to consider the Mother of God in this role as witness. Is this not a weakening of the Gospel revelation of what was *accomplished* by her *Fiat,* her free consent to the redemptive Incarnation?

Dr. Pelikan makes a telling remark concerning the danger which always threatens moral theology: the temptation to revert to mere casuistry, when he speaks of it as " prescribing for and anticipating the various circumstances in which an ethical decision must be made " (p. 87). His remark is strengthened by the example he gives, a case extracted from a respectable Catholic review. But one might answer: " This is *not* moral theology. It is the exercise of prudence; and, besides, it touches the fringe rather than the core of Christian existence." All this may be granted. Yet it is possible that Dr. Pelikan has touched a spot that needs constant reexamining on our part.

Perhaps a fitting close to this sketchy review would be the mention of the author's attempt to define the difference between the Protestant and the Catholic concepts of the apostolic succession, in the chapter entitled, " The Unity We Have." There is no denying that this is the key ecumenical problem where Protestants are concerned. Is the Church apostolic " because and in so far as it obeys [the] apostolic authority, which has been vested in the bishop of Rome," or is it rather because of its " loyalty to the apostolic scriptures of the New Testament."?

When it is possible to ask the question in these terms, it might seem that we have reached an impasse. After all, there is a clear contrariety of position, and on the basis of the experience of history we know that the rift is really *there.* Yet it is such men as Dr. Pelikan who ask the question, and who, while holding the position contrary to our own, continue to seek an answer from the Catholic Church. It does not seem right that he and

our other separated brethren in Christ should be denied the right to that dialogue.

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The Phenomenon of Man. By PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959. Pp. 311, with index. $5.00.

This is an essay which appears under peculiarly diverse auspices—written by a Catholic priest with a laudatory introduction by an admitted atheist, printed by friends of the author after having been refused printing by the Society of which he was a member, suspected of heresy by reviewers in some continental journals and hailed as brilliant and orthodox in American publications. At the least, the book ought to be intriguing.

Some of the diversity of opinion regarding the merits of this book can perhaps be explained if account is taken of the unusual point of view from which it was written. It is a question of literary genre. If the book is judged by what it ought to say, or by what it tends to imply, it is patently vulnerable from the points of view of theology and philosophy and even of science. And perhaps precisely because of this, the restricted point of view adopted by the author cannot be justified; perhaps he could not avoid entanglements with other levels of knowledge however much he so desired. Perhaps he saw this, and persisted anyway, for purposes which were ultimately apologetic, or apostolic. Or perhaps he believed that his approach was itself basically valid and productive of an authentic truth—these are interesting questions, and if they could be settled, the judgments passed on the book would not display such confusing diversity. But first, it would be better to describe Fr. de Chardin's methodology, and to give some account of the gist of his doctrine, before weighing them on scales whose measurements he was not, within the limits of his immediate purpose, acknowledging, but to which he must eventually submit.

Fr. de Chardin has written a vivid account of the origin and development of the cosmos as an evident manifestation of universal evolution. He is determinedly non-theological; his descriptions never rest on any revealed truths. He claims, moreover, that he is non-philosophical. He is determined to rely wholly on the phenomenal evidence, on the concrete manifestations of the origins and developments of physical things as these are revealed especially in the sciences of paleontology and archaeology. In this light, he claims to see a movement of cosmogenesis, an infinitely slow coming-to-be of more and more complex states of matter, up to and beyond the organization of matter into manifestly living states, and up beyond this

to the revealing of consciousness, and beyond this, into the emerging of a super-consciousness which opens itself to God, and so is consummated.

What can be said of this? In the first place, it does not seem to be a heretical thesis, not even materially. In its development there are admittedly places where a sense of the Faith and theology cries loudly for a hearing, and Fr. de Chardin resolutely refuses it. But this is not necessarily heresy. The theologian might say: If you do not defer to revealed knowledge here, you are heretical. Fr. de Chardin would reply: At present, I am speaking only from a phenomenal point of view, which does not extend itself to revealed truths; phenomenally this is what we see, and only this. In footnotes and in the epilogue, the requirements of theology are met, and the author reveals himself as a believer. A dangerous mode of proceeding? Perhaps. With an apostolic end in view? Perhaps again, although it is evident that those he might have been most interested in converting have by no means been persuaded (see the Introduction). They have taken whatever fitted their own purposes from the long tale of evolutionary speculation, and rejected whatever they found unpalatable, and the work itself, it must be granted, is sufficiently incoherent to allow such fragmentation. But it does not seem at any point to come into direct conflict with the truths of theology, and this is probably why it has so far escaped formal censure.

What of the demands of philosophy? Has the author been as successful in postponing an involvement with this discipline to another time and another level of thought? It would seem that he has not, nor indeed that he could, for while on the one hand he expressly excludes philosophical procedures from his methodology, his whole purpose in the book is to formulate what would commonly be called a philosophy—in fact, he philosophizes from one end of the book to the other. His relation to science is somewhat different. He appeals expressly to scientific methodology for justification, yet frequently departs from it. In effect, in virtue of his "phenomenal approach," he seems to avail himself of the fruits of any methodological procedure which will serve to build up his thesis, while avoiding the probative demands of all. At times, indeed, he seems unwilling to defend any definite position! "Even reduced to these humble proportions, the views I am attempting to put forward here are, of course, largely tentative and personal" (p. 35).

This general approach is expressed early in the book. "This work may be summed up as an attempt *to see* and *to show* what happens to man, and what conclusions are forced upon us, when he is placed fairly and squarely within the framework of phenomenon and appearance" (p. 31). The italics are the author's. "To see" is for him *the* intellectual act. "In these pages that follow, I intend to develop a simplified but structural representation of life evolving on earth; a vision so homogeneous and coherent that its truth is irresistible. I provide no minor details and no

arguments, but only a perspective that the reader may see and accept—or not see" (p. 103). This is the heart of Fr. de Chardin's position—he will show, but without proof; the reader will see or not see. But is he relieved thereby in the course of his development of accounting for his opinions and of taking the opposition into view? Is the coherence of his vision a proof? What is irresistible truth?

He does not intend to be philosophical. "So please do not expect a final explanation of things here, nor a metaphysical system" (p. 33). "To harmonize objects in time and space, without presuming to determine the conditions that can rule their deepest being: to establish an experimental chain of succession in nature, not a union of 'ontological' causality; to see, in other words, and not to explain—this, let it not be forgotten, is the sole aim of the present study" (p. 58). But the whole point of his evolutionary doctrine is to show that one mode of causality has operated in the world and not another. Evolution in nature, and not causality outside of nature, or any other mode of causality, is the best explanation of the present world. Beyond this, the author has much to say on many other philosophical points, on actuality and potentiality, on determination and chance, on truth and goodness, unity and diversity, dualism and monism, on the constitutive of personality, on the essential natures of things, on the proper powers and passions of natural bodies, on the nature of man, of the mind, of love, of society. This is philosophy, and the force and moving power of the book lies largely in the way it handles these many topics. Nevertheless, the philosophizing is not careful nor rigorous, and this is the author's greatest weakness.

Fr. de Chardin does wish to be considered scientific. "From this phenomenal point of view (which is *the* scientific point of view) can one go beyond the position where our analysis of the stuff of the universe has just stopped" (p. 58). Against this, however, he confesses his unfamiliarity with the physical sciences, and the transitory nature of the scientific hypotheses on which he will support his theorizing (p. 39). He also formulates concepts basic to the thesis which have nothing to do with science, for example, the "within" of things, the "crises" in evolutionary movement. He resolves issues which are still controverted, e. g., orthogenesis, the chance origin of life. He forms "scientific" views of things which have not yet been successfully reduced to scientific methodology: consciousness, reflection, life, thought (p. 268). He envisions a future world of a definite form, in the name of the same "science." "This is the general form in which, by analogy and symmetry with the past, we are led scientifically to envisage the future of mankind" (p. 251). In fine, sometimes the author appeals to scientific fact, sometimes he adopts theories which have only this merit, that at least they do not contradict science (p. 307), sometimes he chides science for not accepting what he sees (for example, that the principle of the conservation of energy is wrong,

(pp. 65-66), sometimes he moves science into areas it does not yet generally acknowledge. In the light of all this, it would be difficult to define just what he means by science.

So much for methodology. If the doctrinal content of Fr. de Chardin's essay is considered, there are again a number of points the reader might want to challenge, mostly centering around his idea of evolution. Now, the explanation of the origins of many of the various types of living things by a natural process of evolution is a pretty thoroughly authenticated thesis, attested by scientific evidence and justifiable philosophically. Evolution as a natural process is well accredited. But evolution as a universal cause, explaining the orgins of all the types of living things from one or a few prototypes does not enjoy the same standing. By any standards of science or philosophy, it is as yet unproved. What can be said for it is that it is a sound working hypothesis, and the only such hypothesis presently available—an explanation which accords with many facts, is suggestive of many lines of investigation, and unrivalled by an alternative scientific hypothesis—but all this does not establish it as demonstrated. Granted that it is often described as doctrine rather than hypothesis (although seldom in serious scientific works), and granted that it exasperates some scholars to be unable to call it a proven doctrine, and granted finally that it would be philosophically intelligible, it still stands as an unconfirmed conjecture, subject to eventual discard if it cannot prove its case. And all are agreed that the case for evolution still lacks many essential connections, even after a hundred years of sustained investigation. For instance, the lines of development of the major forms of living things from a single original type are still wholly unevidenced. Pre-Cambrian rock seems largely azoic; Cambrian rock already contains almost all the major phyla. The relations of the phyla are still much controverted, and this is not an insignificant difficulty. Within a phylum, the lines of origin of orders and classes are still mysterious, even with the discovery of some possible "missing links"; indeed some of these links pose more new problems than they solve. The line of specifically human development is plagued by its own peculiar problems—it seems to run counter to the mode of development exhibited in all other living forms, forcing theorists into such rather bizarre explanations as the theory of the foetal origin of the human race. Finally, the process by which evolutionary changes took origin is still unaccounted for—mutation as it is known scientifically does not account for all the kinds of changes seemingly observed; "gross" mutation is not yet a substantiated postulate, and, if actually operative, would seem more likely to destroy than develop an organism. Once hailed as the key to evolution, mutation is now not so generally accepted as a sufficient explanation, and faith is being restored in the results of new and more extensive searches for missing links. With such difficulties besetting it, few other scientific theories would have enjoyed so sustained and wide-

spread support as the theory of evolution, except for the fact that there are no other theories to challenge it.

It is to be hoped that more and more thorough investigation will some day settle the theories of evolutionary development; that the points of origin and lines of development will become clearly established (Fr. de Chardin believes this is impossible), and that known natural processes will be discovered which are adequate to explain the facts. Or alternatively, that the origin and development of living types will be placed demonstrably beyond the scope of natural processes. Either eventuality would be welcome as a significant advance in human knowledge, but until one or the other is actually accomplished, it is rash to raise up a theory of cosmogenesis based uniquely on evolutionary premisses (and extended even to non-living things). A theory based on facts is sufficiently tenuous; a theory based on hypotheses cannot command too much respect.

That, probably, is the principal objection to Fr. de Chardin's thesis—it builds too much on too insecure a foundation. But it is not the only objection. Closely seconding it is the philosophical explanation he adopts to account for new origins in the course of evolution. There are several diverging opinions which can be adopted in this regard. If it is held, on the one hand, that nothing in the world is essentially distinct from anything else, there is no problem for an evolutionist—the vast variety of things are only superficially different, radically the same; there is no problem of something having come from nothing. If it is held, on the other hand, that there are essentially distinct species of things, and that they developed one after another, and in some sense one from another, the problem immediately arises: what is the cause of the truly original characteristic. Either something has come from nothing, or some agent either within or outside the natural order has interjected the force of his causality to produce the new. Now, Fr. de Chardin does accept God truly, transcendent and omnipotent, but he does not (at least not always) wish to appeal to divine intervention to account for the origin of essentially new types, nor does he fall into the error of allowing something from nothing. His solution is to have all things in the universe existing from the beginning, but latently, hiddenly, too tenuously to be effective, until the complexification of matter should be sufficient to support them in full flower. Therefore consciousness, intelligence, love, sensation, life itself all exist in all matter, even in the first unknown mass-energy of pre-sellar gases. Rocks and metals have a "within," an internal radiant energy which is the substance of life and consciousness, only not sufficiently concentrated in these poorly organized (complexified) forms of matter to be evidenced.

If things are really not what they are seen to be, but far subtler and vaster things, only latently, and what they really are is wholly unsusceptible to investigation and experience (since the hidden energies can in no way be exercised until the thing reaches a higher state of complexification,

whereupon it has become something else, having passed through a "critical stage" of evolution) no theory of science or philosophical principle can ever be verified by reference to the facts. The "real" nature of things can only be asserted, never proved.

In all this, Fr. de Chardin does not deny the exigencies of the principle of act and potency, but he does deny (at least at times) its applicability to the realm of evolving nature. Here he posits only virtuality, a virtual pre-containment in the primordial universe of all the varieties of characteristics which have later been evidenced. "We are back at the refrain that runs all through this book. In the world, nothing could ever burst forth as final across the different thresholds successively traversed by evolution (however critical they be) which has not already existed in an obscure and primordial way" (p. 71). In the last analysis, nothing is new in the world; everything existed virtually before it appeared formally. The fact of this virtuality, however, can not be proved.

Even in assuming virtuality, however, Fr. de Chardin is not consistent throughout. The final stages of evolution demand intervention from supernatural causes. A "psychical centre of universal drift" is needed, "transcending time and space and thus essentially extra-planetary, to sustain and equilibrate the surge of consciousness" towards super-consciousness (p. 273). God is needed for the last evolutionary thrust. But is He not needed from the very beginning? "In Omega we have in the first place the principle we needed to explain both the persistent march of things towards greater consciousness, and the paradoxical solidity of what is most fragile. Contrary to the appearances still admitted by physics, the Great Stability is not at the bottom . . . but at the top. . . ." "During the immense periods in the course of evolution, the radial, obscurely stirred up by the action of the *Prime Mover ahead* (author's italics), was only able to express itself, in diffuse aggregates, in animal consciousness" (p. 271). This is sound doctrine, but is it still evolution?

To take the thesis point by point: the beginnings of the material universe are still, as the author is constrained to acknowledge, very obscure and conjectural. ". . . at the stage of the atom, we are still ignorant of many points in the history of the world." "It does not appear that science is at present able to give definite answers to these questions, or to others like them" (p. 48). "Our science it at the same time troubled and fascinated by these colossal (sidereal) masses . . ." (p. 50). These admissions, once made, nevertheless do not prevent the author from expressing definite views on what actually did happen: he posits a phylogenesis of elements on an analogy, apparently, with the present ordering of matter from the simplest to the most complex. He asserts that matter has from the beginning obeyed the laws of biology, i. e. living matter (p. 48).

Once he has the elements compounded, he postulates that the earth came into being by chance, and that by the interior, "radial" energy of matter

(radial energy is the primordial form and cause of what is eventually life and consciousness), the elements begin to form themselves into more complex states, by their inherent capacities. Eventually matter reaches the stages of mega-molecules, close in complexity to the most primitive forms of life, and while such molecules are inherently unstable, they are conceived of as being formed over an immense stretch of time, and as leading inevitably not to their terms of decomposition, but to higher forms of matter (p. 85).

Eventually life appears, i. e., matter has become so complexified by its own activities that it builds itself up to the level of biological function. This is, of course, all postulational, for so far the evidence of the existence of borderline life, or the possibility of it, is not scientifically established, although it may someday be shown. Besides these postulates, which may be acceptable as working hypotheses, de Chardin adds that of a new form of consciousness, although, as he says: "It is not easy . . . to be clear on this point" (p. 88). He goes on to argue that it was not impossible, and therefore it must have happened! This, he adds, will never be proved one way or another, and indeed cannot be.

Once he has reached the stage of living things, the author's thesis comes close to the point at which actual evidence can be brought forth to support it. At one stage in the pre-history of the world, the living forms fossilized and those fossils can be found today in the earth's strata. The fossils of the earliest animals and plants are fossils of living things in a fairly high stage of development, and in a variety which has not changed fundamentally down to modern times. How this complexity was reached and how this variety was produced is still an unsolved question; universal evolution posits a gradual coming to be and diversification, the records of which are lost in the distant reaches of past ages, and perhaps never to be found, if the living forms were too soft-bodied to leave traces.

But, taking the development from the first appearances of fossils and bringing it down to modern times, we find yet, even among evolutionists, no great agreement on what happened or on how it came to be. How rapidly evolution took place, by what lines of formation, by what means, with direction or at random—these and many other questions cannot yet be decided because of the fragmentary nature of the remains. The author opts for an internally directed evolution, leading in the direction of man, in virtue of an ever more complexly involved nervous system. This position is in fact vigorously denied by many students of evolution, but necessary for the author's thesis—for him the line of development necessarily leads to the emerging of full consciousness (p. 180).

Once evolution has reached the stage when man appears—the process of "hominization" taking place—it has reached the term towards which it was tending from the beginning. De Chardin gives a summary account of the origin of man from lower forms of life, not excluding the possibility here

of direct supernatural intervention to account for man's spiritual powers (p. 169). And the process of "hominization," once begun, as a discreet event in the otherwise homogeneous flow of evolutionary process, continues as man's consciousness evolves. At this point, evolution is transposed into the psychic sphere. The author seems to believe that evolution as a natural process ceases with man, the evolutionary ferment rising now in a new sphere, the sphere of the mind. And in this sphere, indeed, the process of evolution is vividly manifest—the developmnt of ideas, of inventions, of languages, of arts, of sciences, of all civilization. But certainly this "evolution" is a strikingly different kind of thing from the evolution which preceeded it. The "mutations" are supplied by insight and intelligence, invention and originality; the "acquired characteristics" are directly transmitted by the "heredity" of learning and communication. This is Lamarchian evolution! It can hardly, however, be made one piece with the evolution of life prior to the rise of intelligence. It is interesting to speculate, at this point, whether or not Fr. de Chardin's fervent espousal of evolution as an explanatory cause for the development of all things is not rooted, in fact, in his work with archaeology, paleontology and anthropogy. When the growth of human civilizations is considered, the progress by way of "evolution" is striking, beset with none of the difficulties with which natural evolution is entangled. The direction is clear, and the directing agent, the origin of novel characteristics and their adoption and transmission in time—it does not seem implausible that Fr. de Chardin, the archaeologist, extrapolated to the cosmos the ideas which had become second nature to him after a lifetime in his own field. Remarks like the following tend to lend support to the notion: "We saw geogenesis promoted to biogenesis, which turned out in the end to be nothing else than psychogenesis" (p. 181).

Having taken the story of evolution up to the present, the author makes a prognosis of future developments. He analyzes the contemporary intellectual and moral malaise, perhaps much oversimplifying matters, and in this he will probably be rebuked by the sociologists and anthropologists as well as the theologians and philosophers. His prevision of the end of the world, although couched in naturalistic terms, leans heavily on Christian theology, as he himself admits. The Mystical Body of Christ, Christian love and mystical experience, the Parousia, the last judgment, even Armageddon, are truths of Christian revelation which have furnished de Chardin with the blueprints for his estimate of the final stages of evolution. Whether he means to imply them here in their supernatural sense, or whether he is speaking of their natural foreshadowings as elements in human history, or whether he means that nature itself provides analogues of these supernatural events, is hard to determine. Without the Incarnation these ideas do not have force, and the Incarnation is not an evolutionary stage.

What can be concluded? The author has attempted a philosophy of cosmic proportions, with the capacity to make the universe in the whole time-space continuum intelligible. His basic procedure is extrapolation—the extension of a fact or insight or principle from a limited area of application to a universal, and this leaves him open to numerous attacks; his system is left incoherent and ill-founded factually. The force of his essay derives largely from his rhetoric, and partly from the apparent consonance with some speculations of contemporary scientists. He had a brilliant and fertile imagination, a real genius at forming metaphors, a capacity to make facts come alive in verbal descriptions. This, however, does not make science or philosophy. Nor is it perhaps a service to have tried at this time to raise vivid description to the level of demonstrated truth: there are other serious efforts under way these days to incorporate the demonstrable aspects of evolutionary doctrine into larger philosophical frames (for example, the work of J. R. E. Ramirez), and these might be overshadowed by more popularized attempts. Undoubtedly, though, "The Phenomenon of Man" will have its fun, perhaps it will stimulate some genuine scholarship; it seems debatable whether it will make a lasting contribution itself.

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BRIEF NOTICES

Le Traitement Scientifique de la Morale Chrétenne selon S. Augustin. By Thomas Deman, O. P. Montreal: Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, and Paris: J. Vrin, 1957. Pp. 133.

The last work of the late eminent Père Thomas Deman, O. P., is concerned with the development of St. Augustine's moral thought, not from a primarily historical or critical point of view but more with a view to emphasizing the evolving ideas of the Bishop of Hippo on the method of treating Christian morality. P. Deman's aim is not to expose or summarize Augustine's actual teaching on moral topics such as faith, charity, almsgiving or marriage, but rather to stress the notions which would supply the basis for a fully scientific treatment of the theology of the Christian life. As is pointed out in a preface, this volume is an expansion of a section of the author's *Aux Origines de la théologie morale* (Montreal, Paris: 1951) which was devoted to the gradual development of moral theology as an integral and fully scientific part of the whole of sacred doctrine. While this full development was not to be accomplished until St. Thomas wrote the *Secunda Pars*, it is to St. Augustine that the theologian looks for the inspiration and many of the key notions which provided the basis for this later growth. This work of P. Deman's is thus of great significance to-day when so much attention centers on the methodologic construction of a moral theology, for the author has ably and thoroughly pointed out the great ideas of Augustine which are operative in such a construction.

Moral theology first of all is not a heterogeneous mixture of Christian thought and pagan speculation. It is primarily an outgrowth and an exigency of the faith itself—a point well made by the author in Chapter I, and which is certainly essential to an understanding of the true homogenity of faith and theology. The author points out that Augustine's moral teaching passed from the stage of being an exhortation and explanation of rules consequent on catechetical instruction to a more conscious and systematic matter in which the phase of moral exhortation would depend on a exposition of moral *doctrine*. The catechetical works of the great Doctor insist on the necessity of moral in addition to doctrinal instruction but there is as yet no plan for a genuine moral theology on a scientific basis. In this category, P. Deman places works as the *de catechizandis rudibus*, and the *de fide et operibus*.

In other writings, Augustine stressed more the need for a moral doctrine around which to organize and on which to base pastoral teaching and

instruction in the good life. In elementary form and in relation to particular problems, this is manifested in such works as the *de bono viduitatis* and the *de continentia* in which Augustine found the need for an explanation in rational terms of the Christian values. The *Enchiridion* with its division of teaching into the *quid credendum*, *sperandum* and *amandum* is a step to more general organization based on Scriptural teaching: the essential need for charity in imitation of Christ. Yet this synthetic work does not contain the notions necessary to explain and understand the relations of faith and love, the place of law and authority in reference to charity, and the structural relationship of the various Christian virtues. At least, there is a recognition of the need for a doctrine of Christian action as well as for an exposition of Christian faith.

Augustine's knowledge and high regard for philosophy was to provide the necessary intellectual tools for deeper understanding and a more rationally coherent treatment of the moral life. Here the great Doctor is presented (Chapter VI) as making his most notable contributions to the development of a moral synthesis. Basic to this was the place assigned to the notion of beatitude: of human life centered on and understood in terms of a seeking of God, the object of beatitude. Moral rectitude, later to be so strongly emphasized by St. Anselm, is based on the direction of man's life to his natural destiny. Augustine accepts this notion "without the least hesitation or difficulty" (p. 54), without seeing any conflict between the primacy of beatitude and the role of duty, nor between the *bonum honestum* and the *bonum delectabile* of beatitude. This beatitude for the Christian is far more than the pagan philosophy could reveal; it is the gift of God (p. 81), yet it is in harmony with the universal desire of all men for happiness (p. 60). Furthermore, this Christian beatitude is a harmony of the place of knowledge (seen by Augustine as clearly stated in John 17:3) with the essential Christian value of charity: a notion distinctive of Augustinian thought which would be the subject of dispute in the 13th century.

Around the central themes of beatitude and charity, Augustine saw the cluster of virtues, including the four cardinal virtues of philosophy. These were seen in such close connection with charity—as forms of charity exercised in the various areas of human life—that Augustine lessens their virtuous character in the man whose life is not centered upon the true beatitude (p. 84). The place of the virtues is understood as preparing for beatitude in accord with divine law and the truly virtuous nature of the virtues outside the order of grace is minimized. Augustine in his teachings on virtue, though never fully developed, does provide the basis for a more scientific organiation and treatment to come in the 13th century.

A final and noteworthy Augustinian contribution which P. Deman stresses in speaking of the *de doctrina christiana* is the famous and fundamental distinction of the *fruenda* and *utenda* (Chapter XI)—a profound

insight which enables moral thought to speak of the orders of ends and of means, even though Augustine himself did not take full advantage of this distinction by failing to see clearly the differences of practical knowledge and action, or even, we may add, of nature and grace. Furthermore, the *de doctrina christiana* with its famous methodological distinction of wisdom from science, and its assertion of the usefulness of the latter, centered on the things of this life and on the areas of the moral virtues, will provide later ages with a legitimization of the work of reason in theology. P. Deman suggests (pp. 115 ff.) that this distinction is close to that of speculative and practical knowledge, although the real meaning of the distinction will depend on the Aristotelian analyses not available to Augustine.

P. Deman has thus emphasized those aspects of Augustine's moral teaching which are of special concern to the construction and elaboration of a moral science. The main criticism that may be made is that he seems to have studied Augustine with an eye to the later medieval and especially Thomistic syntheses, and thus perhaps reads back into Augustine notions or concerns which did not appear clearly, if at all, in Augustine himself. This makes the volume less valuable historically from the point of view of strict Augustinian exegesis, but of greater value in appraising the contribution of the great Doctor in the field of moral theology. For this reason, the moralist especially is urged to become familiar with this study, if only to understand better the richness of Augustinian thought, and the need for a scientific exposition of the Christian life. The volume provides a fitting and noble conclusion to a life of rich and profound research in moral theology which is characteristic of all of P. Deman's work.

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Philosophy and Linguistic Analysis. By Maxwell John Charlesworth Pittsburgh: Duquesne University, 1959. Pp. 234. $5.50.

Dr. Charlesworth has chosen a happy title for his latest book. Certainly Linguistic Analysis should not be confused with Philosophy. This present volume is the ninth in the Philosophical Series of the Duquesne Series and will rate as a standard work on the contributions of the analysts. How timely the book is can be gathered from the fact that the American Catholic Philosophical Association has given its entire 1960 meeting to a consideration of the linguistic analysts.

Perhaps the Annual Association Address of 1956 delivered by Dr. Mortimer Adler prepared that Catholic society for such a study. In that talk, Adler contended that " with exceptions so rare that even they may be doubted, philosophers do not actually join issue. Philosophers fail to disagree because they fail to achieve the minimal topical agreement prerequisite to genuine disagreement." The linguistic analysts carry this beyond that point and say with G. E. Moore: ". . . difficulties and disagreements . . . are mainly due to a very simple cause: namely, the attempt to answer questions without discovering precisely *what* question it is which you desire to answer " (p. 14).

For Adler there is no genuine disagreement because no one will really listen to what the other philosopher is saying. For Moore there is nothing but disagreement because the philosopher does not even know what he is trying to answer. The problem for Adler is that of a dialogue; for Moore, it is a monologue. Both are saying that we do not understand language either because we do not listen or because language is simply too ambiguous. In either case we need an analysis.

Philosophy and Linguistic Analysis gives us the problem of meaning and Professor Charlesworth presents a first rate compendium on a host of second rate thinkers: G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, Wittgenstein, A. J. Ayer, and those of the Cambridge and Oxford Schools interested in the problems of language and meaning. The author's contention is that too many thinkers have not taken these men seriously enough. Indeed, as he observes in a footnote: " One must remark upon, and lament, the almost complete lack of *rapprochement* between contemporary English and Continental philosophy. The analysts tend to look upon the movement of phenomenology as a kind of philosophical joke and, so far as they look upon the analysts at all, the phenomenologists return the compliment " (p. 193).

In the concluding chapter, Dr. Charlesworth sets forth what he considers to be some worthwhile contributions for the Scholastic philosophers to gain from the linguistic analysts. With all respect possible to the many writers of this theory on language and attitude towards philosophy, one must admit that it is extremely difficult to see anything more than total confusion and mental frustration from their writings.

Charlesworth's own book is a constant and at times brilliant witness to the futility of taking any of these writers too seriously. The author never is able to refrain from pointing out the illogical consequences of the analysts' proposals, the contradictions within their own writings, and the disdain shown towards one branch of the school by another. Linguistic analysis never comes to grips with a genuine philosophical problem and in most instances makes no pretense of wanting to do so. It remains completely on the periphery of serious thought relative to reality. In final judgment, linguistic analysis is a contentious almost silly system of thought that has wasted the time, talents, and potential of a whole host

of English thinkers. Instead of proving that philosophers should take linguistic analysis seriously, Dr. Charlesworth has demonstrated magnificently that his own book is all the reading anyone would want to do on these writers.

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The Inward Morning. By HENRY G. BUGBEE, JR. State College, Pa.: Bald Eagle Press, 1958. Pp. 232. $5.00.

In the Preface to this "philosophical exploration in journal form" the authors writes: "What I have called finality proves to be the unifying theme of the work. By finality I intend the meaning of reality as realized in true decision. The vein in which it comes to us is the vein of wonder, of faith, of certainty. It is the ground of ultimate human concern with which the will is informed. It comes clearest in every unique deed of purest generosity in which a man gives of himself without stint and with all care. In this disciplined liberality is true freedom" (p. 10).

One will note immediately the human condition given to the definition of finality and all the personal references involved in its elucidation; wonder, faith, certainty, human concern, an informed will, generosity, disciplined liberality. Such an approach to philosophy is called by the author "experiential" and beats a path into reality that is at once opposed to the paths of the empirical sciences and abstract philosophical systems. Bugbee insists, in a rather striking image, that "to think experientially is to partake in thought of the closed circuit of reality in which we live and move and have our being" (p. 169), and he is quite definitely opposed to the objectivization in thinking about oneself or other, since this abstracts from reality as the closed circuit. It makes self and other rather the poles of a dead circuit. Such observations are in the stream of contemporary existential thought, especially that of Gabriel Marcel. Indeed, Bugbee is a disciple of Marcel, and the latter has contributed a handsome approval to the book by way of a long, thoughtful introduction.

We should like to recommend this work on several counts. It is a sincere attempt of a man to come to grips with the agonizing problems that face all of us, a man who would be the first to say that he has found no pat solutions. Though obscure and tortuous in many places, and giving one the sense of watching a wrestling match in the dark, the book nevertheless conveys deep involvement in the human condition, affirmation in responsibility, and it sends up a shower of illuminations. Some pages shine with elegance and dignity and peace. The meditation, for example, on the

difference between having a fate and fulfilling one's destiny (p. 144), or the tumble of thoughts on certain night watches at sea (p. 176); his sight into simplicity (p. 170); the very good criticisms of Sartre (p. 126), of William James and John Dewey (203); all these and many others make the book worth while.

The big question that will, of course, run through the mind of a Thomist is: Does all this comprise philosophy? Bugbee is not out to establish any system of thought; with Marcel he takes a dim view of abstraction, or rather what Marcel calls "the spirit of abstraction." This is equated with an attitude of insensitivity and indifference which tends to cut thought off from the life of the spirit. Both recognize the abstraction necessary to all thinking, but they keep bringing their thought back to personal experience, back, as it were, to the closed circuit. Without personal reference there can be no philosophy for them. To defend the objectivity necessary in philosophy, in a report on reality much greater than man, and then to show that such objectivity is no more insensitive than a medical report, and ten times more important, we would need much more than this review. We shall offer these few observations only.

While reading Bugbee's book we thought frequently that the author was more poet or novelist than philosopher. His pen is poignant in setting down his feelings and reactions; and it can involve us acutely in his narrative descriptions. Marcel in the introduction says that this philosophy, with its passionate concern with experience, might lead us to appreciate the metaphysical ground for a certain kind of artistic creation. It is our belief that this statement should be turned about. It seems that a certain type of artistic experience is the ground for this philosophy. The author is more artist than philosopher, more filled with the lyrical joy or gratitude or love or anguish or loneliness of the artist than with the contemplative calm and dispassionate attitude of the philosopher. There is very little difference in Bugbee's mode of thought than that of Shakespeare, in the soliloquies of Hamlet, for example, or of Pasternak in the meditative asides of Zhivago. The mode is that of an artist coming to terms with his experience.

And is not this the great danger of modern phiolsophy? We are having an increasingly difficult time in separating it from art or from a higher kind of personal experience (and Bugbee has his share of this, too, since Meister Eckhart is one of his prophets) from mysticism? Philosophy, whatever it is, is not art or mysticism. Philosophy's main concern is not with the experience of the self; it shares with the sciences (since it is a science as well as wisdom) the humility necessary for grappling with the stubborn facts outside oneself. This is not to say that the philosopher must be devoid of experience—it is common Thomistic teaching that the more sensitive a man is the better philosopher he will be—but it is to insist that he must somehow lose himself in the larger reality he studies.

We rejoiced to read in a recent *Atlantic Monthly* article (" To a Young Writer," Nov., 1959) these words of Wallace Stegner. " In acknowledging that the English language is a difficult instrument and that a person who sets out to use it expertly has no alternative but to learn it, you did something else: you forced yourself away from that obsession with self that is the strength of very few writers and the weakness of so many. You have learned to put yourself in charge of your material. You have not fallen for the romantic fallacy that it is virtue to be driven by it. By submitting to language you submitted to other disciplines, you learned distance and detachment, you learned how to avoid mudding a story with yourself " (p. 89).

This is good advice for the writer of fiction, but how much better advice for the philosopher. Those whom Stegner calls " the ferocious seekers after identity " have infiltrated our culture everywhere, obviously in the arts, but now in philosophy as well. We hope philosophers will learn that detachment is not indifference, that abstraction is not insensitivity, and turn back. They are on the road to the destruction of the self in their exaltation of it. It is we think in all humility that we point to Thomas Aquinas who was a saint and therefore suffered much, and knew the anguish and pain and loneliness of life, but who did not muddy his philosophy with that. He wrote with all the detachment of an Einstein working out his theory of relativity and he arrived, step by step, to that reality greater than himself and greater than the universe.

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